

The School District of Escambia County



Workforce Education
ESCAMBIA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Digital Tool Certificate/Industry Certification Manual

Division of Curriculum and Instruction

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Manual

The objective of this manual is to convey information to all individuals who are involved in student attainment of Industry Certifications or Digital Tools in Escambia County middle or high schools. The manual contains:

- Essential information to understand the background, scope and importance of certification attainment
- Operational procedures to be followed to administer attainment processes and provide adequate and auditable records of the certification attainments

Background, Scope and Importance

In 2007, the Florida Legislature passed the Career and Professional Education Act. The purpose of the act was to provide a statewide planning partnership between the business and education communities to attract, expand, and retain targeted, high-value industry and to sustain a strong, knowledge-based economy. The objectives of the act are as follows:

- To improve middle and high school academic performance by providing rigorous and relevant curriculum opportunities;
- To provide rigorous and relevant career-themed courses that articulate to postsecondary level coursework and lead to industry certification;
- To support local and regional economic development;
- To respond to Florida's critical workforce needs; and
- To provide state residents with access to high-wage and high-demand careers.

To implement the act, the Florida Department of Education (FDOE), the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), and CareerSource Florida are partnered together. At the local level, the act mandates the development of a local [CAPE Strategic Plan](#) prepared by school districts with the participation of regional workforce boards and postsecondary institutions.

A key component of this act is a list of state-approved industry certifications that are critical to Florida's employers. The legislation originally tasked the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) with defining "Industry Certification."

In 2014, Senate Bill 850 s. 1003.492(2), F.S., included the following definition of industry certification:

Industry certification as used in this section is a voluntary process through which students are assessed by an independent, third-party certifying entity using predetermined standards for knowledge, skills, and competencies, resulting in the award of a credential that is nationally recognized and must be at least one of the following:

- a) Within an industry that addresses a critical local or statewide economic need;
- b) Linked to an occupation that is included in the workforce system's targeted occupation list; or

- c) Linked to an occupation that is identified as emerging.

[The ECSD Strategic Plan](#) includes Goal Q.1.6.

Increase the percentage of graduates from the respective graduation rate cohort who earned a passing score on an acceleration examination (AP, IB), a passing grade in a Dual Enrollment course that qualified for college credit, or earned an industry certification (Defined by FDOE as College and Career Acceleration).

The measure of success for this strategy will be based upon increasing the number of students participating in career pathway courses and earning industry certifications.

FLDOE Components

Secondary School Grade—each school is graded based on the components for which it has sufficient data. School grades provide an easily understandable way to measure the performance of a school. Parents and the public can use the school grade and its components to understand how well each school is serving its students. Schools are graded A, B, C, D, or F.

Middle School Acceleration: This component is based on the percentage of eligible students who passed a high school level EOC assessment or industry certification.

High School College and Career Acceleration: This component is based on the percentage of graduates from the graduation rate cohort who earned a score on an acceleration examination (AP, IB, or AICE) or a grade in a dual enrollment course that qualified students for college credit or earned an industry certification.

School Grade calculation information can be found at

<http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/18534/urlt/SchoolGradesCalcGuide18.pdf>

Merit Diploma Designation— When a student has earned a standard high school diploma under section 1003.4282 F.S. and attained one or more industry certifications from the funding list, established per section 1003.492 F.S., the student is eligible for this designation on the high school diploma.

CAPE Bright Futures Scholarship—Eligibility is based on students earning five or more articulated college credits through Gold Standard Industry Certification attainments (Gold Standard Certification can be found at <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/career-technical-edu-agreements/industry-certification.stml>) and thirty hours of community service.

Math and science course substitution—rigorous industry certifications, identified as Gold Standard Industry Certifications, found at <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/career-technical-edu-agreements/industry-certification.stml>, may satisfy up to two math credits and one science credit.

Calculation of additional Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) membership—To qualify for CAPE bonus FTE funding for certifications on the CAPE Funding List, the industry certification must be reported in a registered career-themed course for the school year. (See Workforce Education Specialist and Teacher

Responsibilities for CAPE Digital Tools and Industry Certifications Sections in this document) Digital Tool Certificates do not have to be earned in a career-themed course.

CAPE Digital Tool certificates and industry certifications identified on in the CAPE Industry Certification Funding List earn bonus FTE according to the following FDOE-set factors:

- A value of 0.025 full-time equivalent student membership shall be calculated for CAPE Digital Tool Certificates earned by students in elementary and middle school grades. There is a cumulative cap of .1 per student per school year for elementary and middle school CAPE Industry Certification and Digital Tool Certificate attainments.
- A value of 0.1 or 0.2 full-time equivalent student membership shall be calculated for each student who completes a career-themed course as defined in s. 1003.493(1)(b) and earned an industry certification identified on in the CAPE Industry Certification Funding List.
- A value of 0.2 full-time equivalent membership shall be calculated for each student who is issued a CAPE an industry certification that has a statewide articulation agreement for college credit approved by the State Board of Education. For CAPE industry certifications that do not articulate for college credit, the Department of Education shall assign a full-time equivalent value of 0.1 for each certification.
- A value of 0.5 full-time equivalent student membership shall be calculated for CAPE Acceleration Industry Certifications that articulate for 15 to 29 college credit hours
- A value of 1.0 full-time equivalent student membership shall be calculated for CAPE Acceleration Industry Certifications that articulate for 30 or more college credit hours pursuant to CAPE Acceleration Industry Certifications approved by the commissioner

CAPE Teacher Bonus—the school district shall distribute to each classroom teacher who provided direct instruction toward the attainment of an industry certification that qualified for additional full-time equivalent membership:

According to statute (FS 1011.62) a teacher bonus for each student taught by a teacher who provided instruction in a course that led to the attainment of a CAPE industry certification on the CAPE Industry Certification Funding List of in the amount of \$25 with a weight of 0.1*, \$50 for a weight of 0.2, \$75 for 0.3, \$100 for industry certifications of weights of 0.5 and 1.0. In addition, Escambia County School District pays a \$10 teacher bonus for each Digital Tool Certificate attained.

*Except in the case of middle school teachers whose students earn the Internet Business Associate Certification who will earn \$50 per certification.

USDOE Components

The purpose of this Carl D. Perkins Act is to develop more fully the academic and career and technical skills of secondary education students and postsecondary education students who elect to enroll in career and technical education programs.

The Act supports a state and local performance accountability system designed to assess the effectiveness of the state and local funding recipients in achieving progress in secondary CTE.

The state-developed performance measures must consist of core indicators, any additional indicators that the state determines, and the “state adjusted levels of performance” for all the indicators. They must be developed with input from local recipients. States are required to develop performance measures for the following required core indicators identified in section 113 of the Act:

Secondary Indicators include:

- Academic attainment in reading/language arts and mathematics as measured by the Florida statewide assessments identified in statute
- **Technical skill attainment, including achievement on technical assessments, that are aligned with industry-recognized standards, if available and appropriate**
- Student graduation rates
- Student placement in postsecondary education or advanced learning, in military service, or in employment
- Student participation in and completion of CTE programs that lead to nontraditional fields

CAPE Postsecondary Industry Certification Funding

6A-6.0574 CAPE Postsecondary Industry Certification Funding List

(1) Section 1008.44, F.S., requires the State Board of Education to approve annually a list of industry certifications appropriate for postsecondary programs. This list will be published by the Department of Education and is incorporated by reference in this rule. The CAPE Postsecondary Industry Certification Funding List may be obtained from the Department of Education’s website at <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/index.shtml> or may be obtained from the Department of Education, Room 1548, Turlington Building, 325 West Gaines Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399.

(2) For inclusion on the “CAPE Postsecondary Industry Certification Funding List,” the certification shall:

(a) Require written or performance-based examinations for postsecondary students that are designed to award a certificate only when a student demonstrates competency or proficiency in the certification area;

(b) Be developed by a third party and administered in accordance with the test administration procedures specified by the certifying agency;

(c) Require all written examinations be proctored by a third party and not proctored by the individual providing direct instruction for the industry certification;

(d) Require performance-based competency examinations be independently evaluated and not performed by the student’s direct instructor;

(e) Require the exam questions be delivered in a secure manner and not available to the test proctor for an extended period of time, other than the time necessary to receive, distribute, and return any written materials to the scoring entity; and,

(f) Require that the written examinations be scored by the certifying agency.

(3) This list shall contain waivers of age, grade level, diploma or degree, and post-graduation work experience of at least twelve (12) months, in accordance with section 1008.44(3), F.S.

(a) The specific type of waiver shall be noted on the incorporated list.

(b) Students earning a certification with a waived requirement may be reported for funding if the student completed all of the requirements for earning the certification with the exception of the waived component.

(4) If funds are designated in the General Appropriations Act, this list shall contain a designation of performance funding eligibility in accordance with the provisions of sections 1011.80(6)(b) and 1011.81(2)(b), F.S., based upon the highest available certification for postsecondary students. School districts and Florida College System institutions are eligible for performance funding for students who earn an initial industry certification from the incorporated list with an approved funding designation in the occupational areas identified in the General Appropriations Act.

Florida Statutes – section 1011.80(6)(b)

Performance funding for industry certifications for school district workforce education programs is contingent upon specific appropriation in the General Appropriations Act and shall be determined as follows:

1. Occupational areas for which industry certifications may be earned, as established in the General Appropriations Act, are eligible for performance funding. Priority shall be given to the occupational areas emphasized in state, national, or corporate grants provided to Florida educational institutions.

2. The Chancellor of Career and Adult Education shall identify the industry certifications eligible for funding on the CAPE Postsecondary Industry Certification Funding List approved by the State Board of Education pursuant to s. 1008.44, based on the occupational areas specified in the General Appropriations Act.

3. Each school district shall be provided \$1,000 for each industry certification earned by a workforce education student. The maximum amount of funding appropriated for performance funding pursuant to this paragraph shall be limited to \$15 million annually. If funds are insufficient to fully fund the calculated total award, such funds shall be prorated.

Postsecondary Industry Certification Reporting Process

Upon receiving the results of an industry certification exam, the teacher is responsible for initiating the reporting process. The reporting process requires three steps.

1. Teacher electronically completes an Industry Certification Verification Form which identifies the student, program, teacher, industry certification exam, date the exam was taken, and the result of the exam.
2. Teacher uploads documentation of the exam results/industry credential into Focus on the student's Industry Certification tab.
3. Data specialist receives electronic notification upon the submission of an Industry Certification Verification Form. Once received, data specialist confirms that exam results documentation has been uploaded to Focus. Once confirmed, data specialist enters the data on the student's schedule record, whereby it is then reported to the FLDOE through the Workforce Education Data Systems (WEDS).

CAPE Postsecondary Teacher Bonus

The school district shall distribute to each classroom teacher who provided direct instruction toward the attainment of an industry certification that qualified for funding \$100 per each certification, not to exceed \$3,000 per funding year.

Digital Tool Certificate and Industry Certification Protocol

FLDOE CAPE Industry Certification requirements

Teacher Industry Certification Requirements

F.S. 1003.493 Career and professional academies and career-themed courses. —

(4) Each career and professional academy and secondary school providing a career-themed course must:

(b) Include one or more partnerships with postsecondary institutions, businesses, industry, employers, economic development organizations, or other appropriate partners from the local community. Such partnerships with postsecondary institutions shall be delineated in articulation agreements and include any career and professional academy courses or career-themed courses that earn postsecondary credit. Such agreements may include articulation between the secondary school and public or private 2-year and 4-year postsecondary institutions and technical centers. The Department of Education, in consultation with the Board of Governors, shall establish a mechanism to ensure articulation and transfer of credits to postsecondary institutions in this state.

Such partnerships must provide opportunities for instruction from highly skilled professionals who possess the Digital Tool Certificate or Industry Certification credentials for courses they are teaching.

[Administrative Rule 6A-6.0573](#) relating to industry certification process must be followed.

Test Administration Guidelines

Violation of any of these guidelines will render exam attainments invalid and may result in loss of CAPE Bonus FTE, Teacher CAPE Bonus, and/or a report to the Teacher Professional Practice Board.

- Teachers are not allowed to proctor the Digital Tool certificate and Industry Certification written exam administrations of their own students.
- State Board of Education rule specifies that in order for a district to report Digital Tool Certificate/Industry Certification data, the written exams associated with the industry certification/certificate must have been administered with a minimum of 20 calendar days between test administrations for each student. The 20-day rule does not apply to performance-based exams.
- If multiple written examinations are required for a single certification, the test administration procedures apply to each required exam separately. For example, Microsoft Office Specialist-Bundle (MICRO069) requires a minimum of three written examinations. The 20-day waiting period applies to each of the required tests separately.

If there was a technical glitch during test administration of a written exam, the 20-day waiting period does not apply and it does not count as one of the three allowable exam administrations. All glitches should be documented in such cases.

- State Board of Education rule specifies that in order for a district to report Digital Tool Certificates/ Industry Certification data, the written exams must have been administered no more than three (3) times per student during the academic year.

- Districts are not permitted to report Digital Tool Certificate/Industry Certification outcomes if the test administration does not comply with the requirements or if the certifying agency invalidated test results and/or revoked a credential.

Workforce Education Specialist Responsibilities

1. Consult with schools to identify and align Digital Tool Certificate/Industry Certifications with curriculum
2. Coordinate exam voucher renewal
3. Provide CAPE industry certification professional development and training to teachers
4. Add qualified proctors to vendor's testing platform as necessary
5. Serve as vendor administrator for Digital Tool Certificate/Industry Certifications

School Responsibilities

Test Scheduling:

The Career and Technical Education teacher is responsible for coordinating CAPE Digital Tool Certificates and Industry Certification exam administration.

All [CAPE Test Administration Guidelines](#) must be followed, see section –

The school must have plans to address the following situations:

- Late arrivals – Students arriving after the test has began
- Early Completers – Students completing the test before the end of the test session
- Non-testing students – Students that for a variety of reasons cannot test
- Students needing vendor accommodations for testing

Proctors:

All proctors will be qualified (verify vendor requirements and completed professional development of CAPE requirements). Training is to be coordinated by the Career and Technical teacher prior to exam administration.

Testing rooms should be prepared by the instructors the day prior to the date the Digital Tool Certificate/Industry Certification is administered.

Technical Requirements:

Schools are responsible for ensuring that all computer equipment used for Digital Tool Certificate/Industry Certification testing have the required internet connection, software, and updates.

Computers should be checked and errors resolved the day before testing.

All IT issues, must be reported via a Help Desk Ticket, to the School Technology Coordinator and Workforce Education Technology Specialist who have administrative rights.

Teacher Responsibilities

1. Coordinate exam voucher needs with Workforce Education Specialist.
2. Teacher completes the [Industry Certification Administration Training](#) and submits signed [Teacher Security Agreement](#) to Workforce Education Department Technology Coordinator. (The Teacher Security Agreement is required for teacher CAPE Bonus to be paid.)
3. Review testing plan with school administration.
4. Teachers distribute to students taking a Certiport exam, a [Certiport Parental/Guardian Consent Form](#) that must be signed, returned, and kept on file for five (5) years.
5. For all other testing vendors, beside Certiport, teachers distribute to students, with [student signature verification](#) that the student received the form, a [Parent/Guardian "Opt Out" Letter](#) that informs the parent/guardian that students will be registered with a vendor that will keep the students' information in their databases. Keep this document five (5) years. Students who returns the form stating that the parent does not want the student registered to be tested may not take a Digital Tool/Certification exam.
6. Register students for testing following each vendor's registration process;
 - a. [Certiport Registration Protocol](#) will be followed
 - b. Other vendors, follow vendor protocol
7. Provide to students the name of all certifications that the student will attempt.
8. Prepare students with exam registration information.
9. Report technology issues via School Technology Coordinator and Workforce Education Technology Coordinator.

Coordinate with ESE Department accommodations for students with disabilities if necessary and/or requested. This may include providing a copy of the student's IEP/504 for submission along with testing vendor's accommodation request form with parental permission.
10. Enter exam attempts and outcomes into Optiflow for non-Certiport exams within one (1) week of exam administration. Certiport exam attempts and outcomes are automatically entered into FOCUS.
11. Verify Certiport Certifications for all CAPE Certification, Individual MOS (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) must be checked in individual student Tech Ed Tab.
12. Verify Digital Tool Certificate/Industry Certification data in Survey 5.

Proctor Responsibilities

These responsibilities are to be used in addition to any specific instructions and responsibilities provided by the vendor of the Digital Tool Certificate/Industry Certification Exams.

The Proctor oversees the administration of an exam, to include:

1. Inventory testing materials before and after the exam
2. Maintain attendance seating arrangement to ensure testing security
3. Distribute and collect testing materials
4. Provide instructions to test takers
5. One student at a time, is permitted to leave the testing room for a restroom break
6. Keep track of time
7. Maintain a presence in the testing room to discourage talking or cheating
8. Protect the participants from disturbances and distractions

9. Refrain from answering any questions relative to the meaning or intent of test items
10. Report any irregularities or suspected breach of security to the teacher who reports it to school administration and the Workforce Education Specialist.
11. Review and follow prescribed procedures for specific exam administration
12. Verify if any accommodations will be needed during administration for special needs students
13. Verify that non-programmable calculators, scratch paper, and pencils will be available to the students during the exam session as allowed by assessment sponsor
14. Be aware of participants who may be experiencing problems with equipment, connectivity or any other technical difficulty. If a problem occurs, contact the teacher who will notify the Technology Coordinator.
15. Collect testing materials for any participant who wishes to leave the room, as per exam vendor's guidelines
16. Complete end of exam requirements as per the exam vendor.
17. Collect written exams, answer sheets, or verify electronic tests have been completed properly
18. Notify the teacher who will notify the school administration in the event of behavior issues

Protocol for breach of testing procedures

In the event, of any incident during a testing session, the following procedure is to be followed:

1. Report any irregularities or suspected breach of security to the teacher who reports it to school administration and the Workforce Education Specialist.
2. The Workforce Education Specialist notifies the Director of Workforce Education if appropriate.
3. The Director of Workforce Education notifies the Principal, Middle or High School Director, if appropriate
4. The Director of Workforce Education notifies the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, if appropriate
5. The investigation begins by the District Investigator talking to appropriate parties
 - a. Teachers
 - b. Proctors
 - c. Students
 - d. Vendor
6. Depending on outcome:
 - a. When appropriate the Director of Workforce Education will send findings to vendor.
 - b. When appropriate the Director of Workforce Education will send findings to FLDOE.

“Real Time” Digital Tool Certificate and CAPE Industry Certification Reporting

Recognizing the importance of the goal of increasing students' industry certification attainments, school principals, assistant principals, guidance counselors and teachers benefit when industry certification data is reported in the FOCUS Student Information System in “real time.”

The concept of “Real Time” recording means that data will be recorded in the Focus system as soon as possible after industry certification testing occurs and outcome results are known.

Certiport data is automatically entered into FOCUS on a nightly basis. Teachers may verify the exam ID and is outcome data is accurate anytime by . . . **process to be developed.**

If data is incorrect, the teacher will . . . **process to be identified.**

For non-Certiport exams, teachers will enter CAPE Industry Certification/Digital Tool Certificate ID and Outcome Code (Pass or Fail) into an Optiflow form and upload support documentation at https://workflow.escambia.k12.fl.us/lfserver/x299b53c1z1677947d0e7zx353cgsubxgsx7h?DFS_TargetWindow=x299b53c1z1677947d0e7zx353cgsubxgsx7h&DFS_FormType=crp within one (1) week of the exam administration. All “Pass” Outcomes must have certification documentation in the form of an actual certificate or an official vendor score report uploaded with the Optiflow form. There are several approval levels, but when the certifications have been approved for direct entry into FOCUS, you will receive notification.

This is an auditable process because bonus FTE funding is attached to Digital Tool/Industry Certification attainments.

“Real Time” reporting means that clear metrics will be available in the “Real Time Industry Certification Report” available in FOCUS to reflect the current status of industry certification testing at the individual certification, teacher and course levels.

Contingencies/Variations:

Certiport

Certiport pass/fail updates will automatically be populated into FOCUS.

Optiflow (Non-Certiport)

Initial Fail Outcome with eventual Pass Outcome: When a student has an initial outcome of “Fail” on an exam, the outcome must be reported and entered into FOCUS. The student must wait 20 calendar days before the student may retake the exam. A student may attempt a single CAPE Industry Certification/Digital Tool Certificate Exam up to three times per school year.

If the student eventually passes, the teacher submits via Optiflow along with certification documentation in the form of an actual certificate or an official vendor score within one week of the exam results being made available. FOCUS will replace the previous “Fail” Outcome code for the exam with a “Pass” code.

F.S. 6A-6.0573 Industry Certification Process