



Standards Instructional Guidance Overview

High School Higher Education & Career Path Skills (HS.HCPS)

VERSION 1.0



OREGON
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION



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Purpose of the Standards Instructional Guidance

The Higher Education and Career Path Skills Standards Instructional Guidance is designed to help educators bring the Oregon High School Higher Education and Career Path Skills standards to life in the classroom. This guidance provides context for each standard and offers practical, inclusive, and relevant strategies for implementation.

It aims to support educators in:

- Helping students understand the wide range of educational and career pathways available to them.
- Connecting learning to students' real-world experiences, community contexts, and cultural identities.
- Fostering self-awareness, confidence, and curiosity in exploring postsecondary and career options.
- Creating inclusive, equitable learning environments that honor and empower every student's journey.

Integration of Oregon's Transformative Social and Emotional Learning (TSEL)

TSEL is woven throughout the standards guidance to support student well-being, resilience, and agency. This integration encourages:

- Developing students' self-awareness, goal setting, and decision-making skills as they plan for their futures.
- Supporting social awareness, empathy, and cultural responsiveness in navigating career and educational pathways.
- Building relationship skills through collaboration, mentorship, and peer support.
- Promoting responsible decision-making and self-advocacy in career and postsecondary exploration.



Trauma-Informed Approaches

This guidance is developed with a trauma-informed lens. Recognizing that career and educational choices can be deeply influenced by personal and family experiences, the guidance emphasizes:

- Creating safe, supportive spaces for discussing postsecondary and career goals.
- Acknowledging how economic instability, cultural identity, and systemic barriers can shape students' pathways and opportunities.
- Encouraging open conversations that validate students' lived experiences without judgment.
- Offering flexible, student-centered approaches that adapt to students' unique needs and circumstances.

Considerations

Each individual standards guidance document includes a Considerations section, which provides a framework for educators to deepen understanding and tailor instruction to their students' unique needs and strengths.

The Considerations section is organized into three key perspectives:

Socio-Economic

- Highlights how family income, local job market demands, and systemic barriers influence students' access to and perceptions of educational and career opportunities.
- Recognizes that not all students have equal access to resources—like transportation, technology, or professional networks—that support postsecondary and career planning.
- Supports inclusive discussions that validate students' lived experiences and highlight practical strategies for navigating financial, logistical, and systemic challenges.

Culturally Responsive

- Acknowledges how cultural values, family expectations, and community norms shape students' ideas about work, education, and future goals.
- Recognizes the importance of language access and culturally relevant examples to engage all learners in exploring career and educational pathways.
- Encourages educators to create space for students to share and reflect on how their identities, cultural backgrounds, and community ties inform their aspirations.

Strengths-Based

- Centers student assets—such as resourcefulness, creativity, and resilience—as key foundations for exploring and pursuing educational and career goals.
- Frames challenges as opportunities for growth and celebrates progress, no matter how small, in navigating new opportunities.
- Encourages students to see themselves as capable decision-makers, empowered to build their future pathways and adapt to change with confidence.

Accessing the Standards Instructional Guidance

To dive deeper into each standard, educators can click on the hyperlink for each Domain. The link will take you to the Standards Instructional Guidance document for that Domain which includes the corresponding standards. Each document includes detailed Key Concepts, Essential Questions, Considerations, Vocabulary, Sample Student Activities, Additional Examples and a Supplemental Resources section for each specific standard that can be used to inform your classroom practice.

[HS.HECPS.A: Seeking Assistance and Self-Advocacy](#)

- HS.HECPS.A.1 Explore how personal strengths, aptitudes, interests and values connect with future career paths.
- HS.HECPS.A.2 Identify school and community resources for mental, physical and financial well-being, including an understanding of how to seek assistance.
- HS.HECPS.A.3 Understand the rights and responsibilities that come with being a student and member of communities and organizations.
- HS.HECPS.A.4 Practice self-advocacy by communicating needs clearly in writing and speaking, expressing concerns, and seeking out support when necessary.

[HS.HECPS.B: Career Exploration and Preparation](#)

- HS.HECPS.B.1 Practice employability skills necessary to effectively self-manage and collaborate with others in a workplace setting.
- HS.HECPS.B.2 Understand the diverse range of career pathways available, including, but not limited to, apprenticeships, military service, higher education, trades and non-degree programs.
- HS.HECPS.B.3 Explore local opportunities and benefits for participating in career-connected and community-based experiential learning related to future goals.

[HS.HECPS.C: Postsecondary Readiness](#)

- HS.HECPS.C.1 Explore postsecondary educational and career pathways, and identify necessary training, education, skills, and prerequisites aligned with aspirations.
- HS.HECPS.C.2 Research admission processes for postsecondary pathways and practice applying to apprenticeships, military service, higher education, trades, and non-degree programs.
- HS.HECPS.C.3 Investigate strategies for making well-informed financial decisions about postsecondary pathways, including how to navigate financial aid options (i.e., FAFSA, ORSAA), application processes, and a variety of credible funding sources and scholarships.

[HS.HECPS.D: Workforce Readiness](#)

- HS.HECPS.D.1 Prepare to apply for an entry-level job related to future career goals.
- HS.HECPS.D.2 Prepare a resume and cover letter and determine what to include in a professional portfolio.
- HS.HECPS.D.3 Demonstrate interview skills in virtual and in-person settings.
- HS.HECPS.D.4 Navigate and negotiate offers of employment including human resource paperwork.