



**Project Specific Indicators:**

- X Increased partnerships / alignment
- Increased participation / program growth

- Increased student readiness results (non-academic)

**The Challenge:**

Large community concern around students understanding the importance of soft skills beyond high school. More than 16 companies provided feedback on what they wanted to see in new hires within their companies, and soft skills/work ethic topped the list.

**The Vision:**

Through the *Work Ethic Diploma* students will graduate high school with honors letting area employers know they put a focus on soft skills and understand their role in getting hired and staying employed. Students who graduate with the *Work Ethic Diploma* will be guaranteed an interview with partnering companies if they meet other qualifications. There is preferential hiring given to these students.

**Summary of To-Do's:**

- Gather community stakeholders
- Discuss the issue at hand- students not ready to enter workforce due to lack of soft skill development
- Group creates syllabus vetted by postsecondary and employers on what students to be able to do to show they have the motivation and understanding of being "workforce ready"
- Employers reviewed the 14 components of the diploma requirements. The components cover attendance, types of absences, tardiness, discipline, GPA, drug free, CTE coursework, CTE competition, TN promise, dual enrollment/credit, Industry Certification, enrollment in postsecondary, career readiness certificate, and industry awareness.
- Through district leadership, implement in school district

**Lessons Learned: *Include advice on start-up and sustainability***

- Commonalities between education and workforce discussion exist!
- Cost is minimal, starting the conversation requires clear ideas and next steps to keep all parties engaged
- Must be a win/win for all parties

**Communications:**

- Ensuring educators and employers are speaking about requirements and wants and prioritizing key priorities
- Informing students and parents about the opportunity
- Through LEAP grant, we presented in each district
- Working with Greeneville and Greene County to come on board
- Presenting at LEAD conference
- Met with 26 employers to sign off on the diploma

**Stakeholder Management:**

- Ensuring counselors know what the diploma entails
- Ensuring employers have signed off to guarantee an interview
- Meet in high school with every senior and monitoring points
- Communicate with parents when you have opportunities
- Met with principals to ensure they understood the diploma

**Metrics & Measurements:**

Baseline Data	Progress to Date	Goals
This is the first year of the program (2015)	700 seniors students signed up and pledged completion of the Work Ethic Diploma, anticipated to grow to over 1000 Hawkins, Grainger, and Hamblen graduates this year with the Work Ethics Diploma	Students will benefit from the work ethic diploma and apply the skills they learned in industry and postsecondary.

**Resources:**

- LEAP grant