

# MONTANA STANDARDS FOR WORKPLACE COMPETENCIES

*Due to the explosive growth of technology and the globalization of commerce and industry, today's workplace demands that workers work smarter not harder. Thus, schools must help students acquire workplace skills by assisting them in developing the necessary intellectual abilities and personal traits that help them to secure and maintain employment in the business world. Schools should encourage students to use creative and critical thinking skills, which are transferrable from the classroom to the workplace and to the community.*

*In the schools, these workplace skills must build upon the basic skills, higher order thinking, and the practice of personal qualities that emphasize such things as respect and responsibility. Also, these workplace skills need to be taught and understood in an environment that accurately represents the realities of today's workplace.*

Content Standards indicate what all students should know, understand and be able to do in a specific content area.

Benchmarks define our expectations for students' knowledge, skills and abilities along a developmental continuum in each content area. That continuum is focused at three points—at the end of grade 4, the end of grade 8, and grade 12.

**Content Standard 1—Workplace Resources—Students identify, organize, plan, and allocate workplace resources of time, money, materials, facilities, and human resources.**

**Content Standard 2—Interpersonal Workplace Skills—Students acquire and demonstrate interpersonal workplace skills.**

**Content Standard 3—Workplace Information—Students acquire and use workplace information.**

**Content Standard 4—Workplace Systems—Students demonstrate an understanding of how social, organizational and technological systems work.**

**Content Standard 5—Workplace Technology—Students work safely with a variety of workplace technologies.**

**Content Standard 6—Workplace Readiness/Life & Career Planning—Students acquire and demonstrate skills in life and career planning and workplace readiness.**

# Workplace Competencies Content Standard 1

## Workplace Resources—Students identify, organize, plan, and allocate workplace resources of time, money, materials, facilities, and human resources.

### Rationale

*In order to be productive members of society, students must be able to manage workplace resources.*

### Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. manage time effectively (e.g., assignment notebook, calendar).</li> <li>2. use basic monetary skills.</li> <li>3. acquire, store, allocate, and use materials or space (e.g., supplies, notebook).</li> <li>4. manage personal resources.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. create and manage plans/schedules with specific timelines that take into account constraints, priorities, and goals.</li> <li>2. practice maintaining personal financial records.</li> <li>3. acquire, store, allocate, and use materials or space.</li> <li>4. manage personal and team resources to achieve personal and team goals.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. select goal-relevant activities, rank them, allocate time, and prepare and follow schedules.</li> <li>2. use or prepare budgets, make forecasts, keep records, make adjustments to meet objectives, and evaluate financial records.</li> <li>3. allocate and evaluate time, materials, facilities and resources to set and achieve goals.</li> <li>4. assess skills and distribute work accordingly, evaluate performance and provide feedback toward the accomplishment of personal and team goals.</li> </ol>

## Workplace Competencies Content Standard 2

### Interpersonal Workplace Skills—Students acquire and demonstrate interpersonal workplace skills.

#### Rationale

*Interpersonal skills play a major role in workplace success. It is essential that an individual has the ability to:*

- *participate as a member of a team;*
- *teach others new skills;*
- *exercise leadership;*
- *negotiate/compromise;*
- *work with individual differences and cultural diversity; and*
- *serve clients and customers.*

#### Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
1. practice one’s role as an active and cooperative team player while recognizing individual differences and cultural diversity (e.g., be accountable for one’s actions).	1. use a variety of skills to work as a member of a team while recognizing individual differences and cultural diversity (e.g., listening skills).	1. practice various roles required as a member of an effective team while recognizing individual differences and cultural diversity.
2. demonstrate a learned skill to peers (e.g., give a “how to” demonstration).	2. demonstrate a learned skill and teach others.	2. demonstrate and teach a learned skill including performance evaluation of self and others in this process.
3. identify and practice leadership skills (e.g., team leader, class officer, class job).	3. demonstrate leadership skills by making positive use of rules, regulations and policies of schools and communities.	3. communicate ideas to justify position, persuade and convince others, and responsibly challenge existing procedures and policies.
4. identify and practice negotiation skills and conflict resolution in structured situations.	4. work toward agreements that include exchanging specific resources or resolving divergent interests in structured and unstructured situations.	4. practice and evaluate negotiating process including researching, goal setting, presenting, listening, clarifying, adjusting and compromising.
5. practice basic customer and electronic etiquette (e.g., role-play, order from a menu, appropriate e-mail language).	5. practice positive interpersonal communication skills (e.g., customer service, electronic etiquette, community service project).	5. practice and evaluate positive service skills (e.g., resolving misunderstandings, consumer complaints).

## Workplace Competencies Content Standard 3

### Workplace Information—Students acquire and use workplace information.

#### Rationale

*Students must be able to use information from a variety of resources to assist them in making informed workplace decisions. A student must be able to: acquire, evaluate, and interpret data; organize and maintain; process and communicate workplace information using current technologies.*

#### Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
1. identify a variety of sources that provide workplace information.	1. identify the need for and obtain data in order to make informed decisions in the workplace.	1. gather, compile and analyze data from a variety of sources, and evaluate relevance and accuracy in making informed decisions in the workplace.
2. organize information using systematic methods (e.g., assignment book, alphabetizing, calendar).	2. organize and maintain written or computerized records using systematic methods.	2. organize, process, analyze, and maintain written and computerized records and other forms of information using systematic methods.
3. use a variety of methods (e.g., oral, written, graphic, pictorial, multimedia) to complete a task.	3. select and present information using a variety of methods (e.g., oral, written, graphic, pictorial, multimedia).	3. select, analyze, and present information using a variety of methods (e.g., oral, written, graphic, pictorial, multimedia).
4. access and organize information from print and electronic sources.	4. acquire, organize, communicate, process, and analyze information from print and electronic sources.	4. acquire, organize, communicate, process, analyze and evaluate information from print and electronic sources.

## Workplace Competencies Content Standard 4

### Workplace Systems—Students demonstrate an understanding of how social, organizational, and technological systems work.

#### Rationale

*A system is a set of related parts that together form a whole designed to accomplish a purpose. Complex social systems (e.g., family, community group), organizational systems (e.g., government, school, workplace), and technological systems (e.g., computer network communications) impact outcomes in the workplace. Students must understand these systems and system relationships and function effectively within them. Students must use knowledge/experiences to:*

- *Understand how systems relate to achieving goals;*
- *Demonstrate competence in monitoring and correcting a system’s performance;*
- *Provide input to alter/improve existing systems or develop new systems; and*
- *Use analytical skills to design creative solutions.*

#### Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. identify components of family, school, and community systems encountered in daily life.</li> <li>2. identify and model how components of systems interact (e.g., role-play, class jobs).</li> <li>3. work within a system (e.g., team, study group, group structure, classroom rules, mechanical model).</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. describe and illustrate a system (e.g., relationships among self, family, school, community).</li> <li>2. analyze how a system works (i.e., input, process, output, feedback, performance improvement).</li> <li>3. design and work within a system (e.g., committees, student council, mock government, simple electrical circuit) to manage, control, and improve performance.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. evaluate quality and performance of a variety of systems (e.g., impact of technology on production).</li> <li>2. practice and analyze principles of successful system management considering external factors and planning for uncontrolled variables (e.g., balance professional and personal lives).</li> <li>3. design, evaluate, and refine a system composed of subsystems (e.g., community service project, peer mediation, web page design).</li> </ol>

## Workplace Competencies Content Standard 5

**Workplace Technology—Students work safely with a variety of workplace technologies.**

### Rationale

*The students must be able to select technology, safely apply technology, maintain, and troubleshoot equipment.*

### Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. identify and select information sources using technology.</li> <li>2. solve problems both individually and with others.</li> <li>3. prevent or identify and solve problems using technology.</li> <li>4. discriminate between responsible and irresponsible use of technology.</li> <li>5. identify and demonstrate appropriate care of technological tools.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. use technology for learning, communications, and productivity.</li> <li>2. use technology to observe, analyze, interpret, and draw conclusions.</li> <li>3. prevent or identify and solve problems using technology.</li> <li>4. acknowledge others' rights and practice responsible use of technology.</li> <li>5. manage and maintain technological tools and follow troubleshooting protocol.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. choose procedures and technology to complete a task.</li> <li>2. create new knowledge by evaluating, combining, and extending information using multiple technologies.</li> <li>3. prevent or identify and solve problems using technology.</li> <li>4. practice and advocate ethical behavior in the use of technology.</li> <li>5. manage and maintain technological systems and follow troubleshooting protocol.</li> </ol>

## Workplace Competencies Content Standard 6

### Workplace Readiness/Life & Career Planning—Students acquire and demonstrate skills in life and career planning and workplace readiness.

#### Rationale

*The foundation for a rewarding life and productive employment is built through exploration and an understanding of life and career choices.*

#### Benchmarks

Students will:

End of Grade 4	End of Grade 8	Upon Graduation—End of Grade 12
1. describe how current learning relates to life and career development.	1. identify how the skills taught in school subjects are used in various life roles and occupations.	1. describe how skills developed in academic and occupational programs relate to life and career planning.
2. demonstrate positive ways of performing work activities.	2. demonstrate personal qualities (e.g., dependability, punctuality, cooperation) that are needed to get and keep jobs.	2. display workplace readiness skills (e.g., responsibility, sociability, self-management, job-seeking skills).
3. describe how decisions affect self and others.	3. identify possible outcomes and consequences of decisions.	3. demonstrate decision-making and problem-solving skills.
4. describe various lifetime roles (e.g., friend, student, leader, worker, family member).	4. recognize and describe the interrelationships of lifetime roles of family, community, work, and leisure.	4. describe and evaluate life and career choices and the effect on family and lifestyle.
5. explore and discuss a variety of occupational clusters (e.g., health, science) and their contributions to society.	5. locate, explore, and evaluate a variety of occupations not limited by stereotypes, bias or traditional roles.	5. discuss and demonstrate strategies to overcome bias and stereotyping in the workplace.
6. describe and demonstrate the importance of personal goal setting and planning.	6. explore and identify personal interests, aptitudes and abilities and develop strategies to achieve tentative life and career goals.	6. develop, evaluate, and adjust life and career plans.

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## Workplace Competencies Performance Standards: A Profile of Four Levels

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**The Workplace Competencies Performance Standards describe students’ knowledge, skills and abilities in the workplace competencies content area on a continuum from kindergarten through grade twelve. These descriptions provide a picture or profile of student achievement at the four performance levels—advanced, proficient, nearing proficiency and novice.**

<i>Advanced</i>	This level denotes superior performance.
<i>Proficient</i>	This level denotes solid academic performance for each benchmark. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter.
<i>Nearing Proficiency</i>	This level denotes that the student has partial mastery or prerequisite knowledge and skills fundamental for proficient work at each benchmark.
<i>Novice</i>	This level denotes that the student is beginning to attain the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for work at each benchmark.

### **Grade 4 Workplace Competencies**

**Advanced** A fourth-grade student at the advanced level in Workplace Competencies demonstrates superior performance. He/she:

- (a) consistently applies basic management tools effectively to plan the use of personal resources;
- (b) purposefully practices leadership skills and is an effective team member;
- (c) consistently locates, organizes, and presents workplace information using a variety of print and electronic sources;
- (d) consistently identifies group members and defines their roles within a system;
- (e) consistently demonstrates understanding of the overall operations and practices responsible, safe use of appropriate technologies; and
- (f) clearly describes various lifetime roles and consistently demonstrates positive ways to perform work activities.

**Proficient** A fourth-grade student at the proficient level in Workplace Competencies demonstrates solid academic performance. He/she:

- (a) applies basic management tools to plan the use of personal resources;
- (b) practices leadership skills and is an effective team member;
- (c) locates, organizes, and presents workplace information using a variety of print and electronic sources;
- (d) identifies group members and defines their roles within a system;
- (e) demonstrates understanding of the overall operations and practices responsible, safe use of appropriate technologies; and
- (f) describes various lifetime roles and demonstrates positive ways to perform work activities.

**Nearing Proficiency** A fourth-grade student at the nearing proficiency level in Workplace Competencies demonstrates partial mastery of the prerequisite knowledge and skills fundamental for proficiency in Workplace Competencies. He/she:

- (a) sometimes applies basic management tools to plan the use of personal resources;
- (b) sometimes practices leadership skills and with assistance is an effective team member;
- (c) locates workplace information from a variety of print and electronic sources, but has difficulty organizing workplace information and is uncomfortable making presentations;
- (d) identifies group members and sometimes defines their roles within a system;
- (e) demonstrates understanding of some of the basic operations and, with assistance, practices responsible use of appropriate technologies; and
- (f) sometimes describes various lifetime roles and, with assistance, demonstrates positive ways to perform work activities.

**Novice** A fourth-grade student at the novice level in Workplace Competencies is beginning to attain the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental in Workplace Competencies. He/she:

- (a) seldom applies basic management tools to plan the use of personal resources;
- (b) rarely practices leadership skills but is sometimes an effective team member;
- (c) sometimes locates workplace information from a variety of print and electronic sources, but rarely organizes or presents workplace information;
- (d) sometimes identifies group members, but seldom defines their roles within a system;
- (e) demonstrates a limited understanding of the basic operations, but seldom practices responsible use of appropriate technologies; and
- (f) sometimes describes various lifetime roles, but seldom demonstrates positive ways to perform work activities.

### **Grade 8 Workplace Competencies**

**Advanced** An eighth-grade student at the advanced level in Workplace Competencies demonstrates superior performance. He/she:

- (a) consistently selects and uses a variety of tools to practice time, money, and space management;
- (b) consistently recognizes and practices workplace skills and effectively uses a variety of leadership styles to cooperatively participate as a team member;
- (c) independently uses computers to acquire, organize, process, and analyze information to make informed decisions;
- (d) effectively designs, implements, and evaluates a simple system;
- (e) uses technological skills effectively to create original work, solve problems, including troubleshooting, and evaluate the results; and
- (f) consistently applies personal interests, aptitudes, abilities, and work ethics to daily life and develops strategies to plan life and career goals.

**Proficient** An eighth-grade student at the proficient level in Workplace Competencies demonstrates solid academic performance. He/she:

- (a) prepares and works with a variety of tools to practice time, money and space management;
- (b) recognizes and practices workplace skills and uses a variety of leadership styles to cooperatively participate as a team member;
- (c) uses computers to acquire, organize, process, and analyze information to make informed decisions;
- (d) designs, implements, and evaluates a simple system;
- (e) uses technological skills to create original work, solve problems, including troubleshooting, and evaluate the results; and
- (f) applies personal interests, aptitudes, abilities, and work ethics to daily life and develops strategies to plan life and career goals.

**Nearing Proficiency:** (1) An eighth-grade student at the nearing proficiency level in Workplace Competencies demonstrates partial mastery of the prerequisite knowledge and skills fundamental for proficiency in Workplace Competencies. He/she:

- (a) sometimes prepares and works with a variety of tools to practice time, money and space management.
- (b) recognizes and practices workplace skills and uses some leadership styles to cooperatively participate as a team member.
- (c) uses computers to acquire and organize information, but needs assistance to analyze information and make informed decisions.
- (d) sometimes designs and implements a simple system, but has difficulty evaluating system performance.
- (e) sometimes uses technological skills to create original work and, with assistance, solve problems, but has difficulty evaluating the results.
- (f) sometimes recognizes how the connections among personal interests, aptitudes, abilities, and work ethics help to plan life and career goals.

**Novice** An eighth-grade student at the novice level in Workplace Competencies is beginning to attain the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental in Workplace Competencies. He/she:

- (a) seldom practices or uses a variety of tools to practice time, money, and space management;
- (b) recognizes, but has difficulty practicing, workplace skills, and seldom uses any leadership styles to participate as a team member;
- (c) sometimes uses computers to acquire information, but has difficulty organizing and analyzing information;
- (d) sometimes designs and implements a simple system, but seldom evaluates system performance;
- (e) sometimes, with assistance, uses technological skills to solve problems, but seldom evaluates the results; and
- (f) recognizes, but has a limited understanding of, how personal interests, aptitudes, abilities, and work ethics help to plan life and career goals.

### **Upon Graduation Workplace Competencies**

**Advanced** A graduating student at the advanced level in Workplace Competencies demonstrates superior performance. He/she:

- (a) independently identifies, organizes, plans and allocates workplace resources of time, money, human resources, material and facilities;
- (b) consistently practices workplace skills to identify, analyze, and evaluate procedures, policies, and individual team members' strengths;
- (c) competently communicates, interprets, and evaluates information;

- (d) independently evaluates and redesigns a variety of complex systems to improve system performance;
- (e) consistently selects, uses, and evaluates appropriate technologies and troubleshooting protocol in all learning situations; and
- (f) purposefully develops, evaluates and adjusts life and career plans and effectively demonstrates workplace readiness skills.

**Proficient** A graduating student at the proficient level in Workplace Competencies demonstrates solid academic performance. He/she:

- (a) identifies, organizes, plans and allocates workplace resources of time, money, human resources, material and facilities;
- (b) practices workplace skills to identify, analyze, and evaluate procedures, policies, and individual team members' strengths;
- (c) competently communicates, interprets, and evaluates information;
- (d) evaluates and redesigns a variety of complex systems to improve system performance;
- (e) selects, uses, and evaluates appropriate technologies and troubleshooting protocol in all learning situations; and
- (f) develops, evaluates and adjusts life and career plans and demonstrates workplace readiness skills.

**Nearing Proficiency** A graduating student at the nearing proficiency level in Workplace Competencies demonstrates partial mastery of the prerequisite knowledge and skills fundamental for proficiency in Workplace Competencies. He/she:

- (a) sometimes identifies, organizes and plans workplace resources of time, money, human resources, material and facilities, but has difficulty allocating these resources effectively;
- (b) sometimes practices workplace skills to identify and analyze procedures, policies, and individual team members' strengths; and, with assistance, evaluates the results;
- (c) communicates basic workplace information and, with assistance, interprets and evaluates basic workplace information;
- (d) sometimes evaluates and with assistance redesigns a system to improve system performance;
- (e) sometimes selects and uses appropriate technologies in learning situations and, with assistance, uses troubleshooting protocol; and
- (f) develops life and career plans and, with assistance, evaluates and makes adjustments; demonstrates workplace readiness skills.

**Novice** A graduating student at the proficient level in Workplace Competencies is beginning to attain the prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental in Workplace Competencies. He/she:

- (a) identifies, but has difficulty organizing, planning, or allocating workplace resources of time, money, human resources, material and facilities;
- (b) seldom practices workplace skills;
- (c) seldom communicates, interprets, or evaluates information;
- (d) seldom evaluates and has difficulty redesigning a basic system to improve system performance;
- (e) seldom selects or uses technologies or troubleshooting protocol in learning situations; and
- (f) rarely develops, evaluates, or adjusts life and career plans; but, with assistance, demonstrates workplace readiness skills.