

# FAMILY GUIDE TO INTERMEDIATE CAREER STUDIES

## Elementary School Career Studies IS NOT

Tracking students into pathways based on predetermined criteria.

Requiring students to choose one career.

Choosing a career instead of college.

## Elementary School Career Studies IS

Encouraging curiosity and exploration of their self and the world around them.

Providing opportunities to identify interests, aptitudes, and values and how these connect to careers.

Recognizing that almost all careers require ongoing education and experience.

## Why career studies in elementary school?

Elementary career studies emphasizes career awareness and exploration – ***not career choice***. Research has shown that career interventions at the elementary school level allow children to become more self-aware of their skills, abilities and interests and how those traits relate to future career goals.

## What are elementary school students learning?

The [Kentucky Academic Standards \(KAS\) for Career Studies](#) outline the minimum content Kentucky students should learn within each grade band.

The *KAS for Career Studies* are organized by three domains:

### Essential Skills

These standards address skills necessary for success in the workplace, e.g., adaptability, diligence, initiative, knowledge, reliability, staying drug-free and effective communication.

### Careers

These standards guide students to discover personal interests, skills and values as they explore Career Clusters.

### Financial Literacy

These standards address topics such as credit, debt, saving, investing, and the connection between careers, education and income.

## What opportunities are available in middle school?

In middle school, students have opportunities to identify personal interests and skills through project based learning, exploratory classes, career fairs, guest speakers, etc. They will use this information to create an **Individual Learning Plan (ILP)**. Beginning in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, the ILP has many features and resources that include:

- Finding careers that match their skills and interests;
- Creating education plans;
- Establishing personal goals and revisiting these as they progress through school; and
- Tracking and reflecting on community service experiences, work experiences, career planning activities, and extra-curricular and organization activities.

## What opportunities are available in high school?

Guided by their ILP, high school students have the opportunity to focus on a career pathway leading directly to the workforce or to a postsecondary certificate or degree. The pathway includes both general education and technical courses as well as one or more of the following opportunities:

**Dual Credit** - Students earn high school and college credit at the same time.

**Advanced Placement (AP) Courses** - Students earn college credit by successfully passing an end-of-course (AP) exam.

**Articulated Credit** - Students earn college credit towards participating postsecondary institutions after successfully completing a CTE course.

**Industry Certifications** - Evidence of the skills or knowledge recognized by business and industry and are required for a wide variety of occupations.

**Work-Based Learning** - Students engage and interact with employers through service learning, job shadowing, cooperative education, internships, apprenticeships, etc.

## What are Career Clusters and Career Pathways?

### Career Clusters

- The 16 national clusters provide a framework to organize career and technical education (CTE) programs.
- Careers within each cluster share related skills and knowledge.

### Career Pathways

- Each cluster is divided into Career Pathways that represent virtually every career opportunity available within today's public and private workforce sectors.
- A pathway provides a series of manageable steps, including general and technical courses and industry certifications, to guide students through high school and college.