

WorkSMART connector is a collaboration of local high schools, colleges and employers, in alignment with Future Ready Iowa and the goal to prepare Iowans for the workforce.

For more information contact:

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## WHAT IS WORK-BASED LEARNING?

Work-based learning allows young people to learn skills while on the job with a local employer. Students are paid for their work AND earn college credit for their learning. It results in the same outcome as a traditional college pathway, but with hands-on experience and the opportunity to pay-your-way through an education.

Work-based learning can happen through an apprenticeship, certification program, or internship. It's your opportunity to learn employable skills from a company and mentor who invest in YOU.



[worksmartconnector.org](http://worksmartconnector.org)



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

## STEPS TO A CAREER/DEGREE

### STEP 5 CENTRAL COLLEGE DEGREE (within 3rd and 4th year post high school)

- A. Central College classes and student teaching complete 4-year B.A. in education
- B. Employment continues throughout education
- C. Ready for full-time, permanent employment upon degree completion

### STEP 4 DMACC OR CENTRAL COLLEGE CLASSES (2nd semester of 2nd year post high school)

- A. Central College or DMACC classes apply toward 4-year B.A. degree in education
- B. Employment continues throughout education

### STEP 3 FOR-CREDIT PAID WORK EXPERIENCE/ DMACC DEGREE (within 1½ years post high school)

- A. Local or online classes complete A.A.S. and/or A.A. DMACC degree in early childhood education
- B. Employment continues throughout education
- C. Ready for full-time, permanent employment upon DMACC degree

### STEP 2 CERTIFICATION (within ½ year post high school)

- A. 10 hours/week paid work experience applies to diploma requirements
- B. Local or online classes complete DMACC Early Childhood Education diploma
- C. Ready for full-time, permanent employment upon diploma completion

### STEP 1 FOR-CREDIT PAID WORK EXPERIENCE/ CERTIFICATION (high school)

- A. Full-time job summer between junior and senior year of high school
- B. 10 hours/week job senior year of high school
- C. Ready for full-time, permanent employment upon certification completion

### FOUNDATION

Courses taken in high school/Career Academy provide preparation for work-based learning and DMACC credit.

## WE'RE HERE TO HELP

### Do I have to work a year before I can go to college?

With WorkSMART connector, the job is your coursework, or can happen alongside additional coursework. It's not choosing one or the other. This program allows you to get Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) credit for your work at the jobsite. Take additional DMACC and/or Central College classes to earn your degree(s).

### If I'm working, won't that take me longer to earn a degree?

No, you can actually earn a degree faster because of the academic credit earned for the on-the-job competencies you achieve.

### What will it cost to get my degree?

College credit received for classes taken at the Career Academy of Pella during high school are free of charge. Additional classes taken through DMACC or Central College to earn your degree(s) may qualify for financial aid or may be covered by your employer's education assistance program.

### What's the benefit to everyone involved?

Those involved in WorkSMART connector are all making a commitment, but with a common goal – to help local people, employers and communities thrive. Area educators such as Central College, the Career Academy of Pella and Des Moines Area Community College, are creating unique career pathways to make that a reality for even more Iowans.

### BENEFITS IN ALL AREAS

- ✓ Earn-and-Learn
- ✓ Optional college credit toward 2- and 4-year degrees
- ✓ Career exploration
- ✓ Affordable degree option
- ✓ Mentor guidance
- ✓ Life-skills training

### BENEFITS OF CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

- ✓ Dorm experience as a transition into independent living
- ✓ Campus amenities (social activities, fitness center access, intramural sports, etc.)
- ✓ Pathway Navigator assistance
- ✓ Flexibility re. the institution providing academic credit