



Department of
Education

Work-Based
Learning

Work-Based Learning Implementation Guide

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WBL TOOLBOX: Supplemental materials available in the online WBL Toolbox

INTRODUCTION

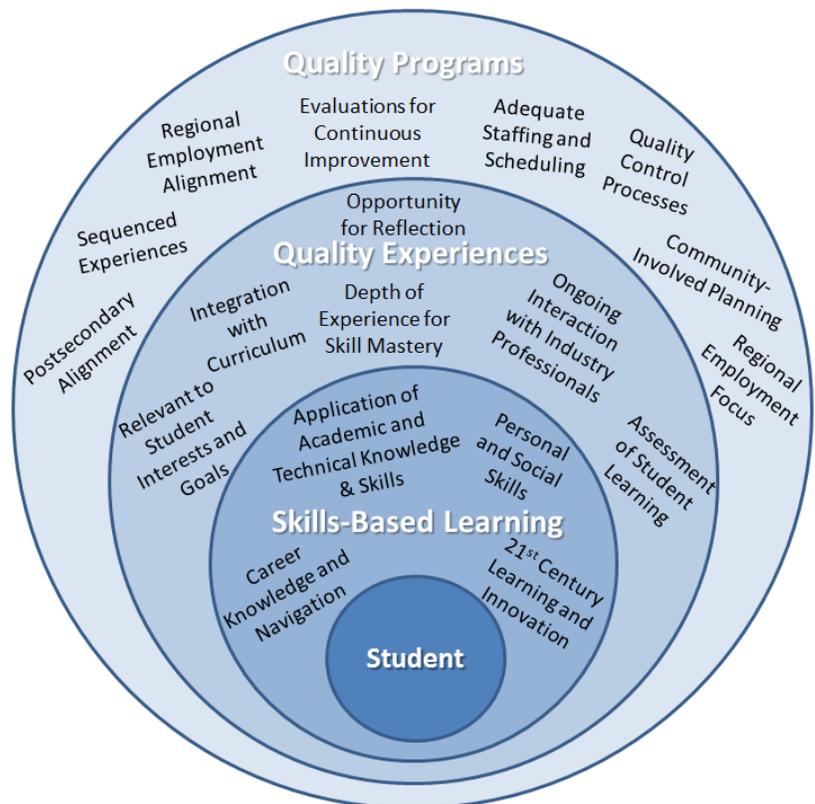
In an increasingly complex global economy, all students must be prepared with intellectual, technical and social skills needed to compete and contribute meaningfully to their communities. For most, this will mean completing some postsecondary education or training; for all, it will mean learning about themselves and the world of work.

This WBL Implementation Guide is required by Tennessee State Board of Education Rule 0520-01-03-.06 and adheres to the WBL Framework established in High School Policy 2.103. It serves to provide supplementary information to the Work-Based Learning (WBL) Policy Guide as well as successful practices beyond what is required by the Policy Guide, and may be used by districts to support outcomes-driven WBL experiences and programs in Tennessee. Local districts are responsible for following the rules and policies of the SBE and the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE). In addition to rules and policies, in the WBL Policy Guide Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) will find an overview of WBL and descriptions of various types of work-based learning. WBL course documents provide additional information about specific credit-bearing WBL experiences. These three documents — the WBL Policy Guide, the WBL Implementation Guide, and the course documents — together provide the necessary guidance to LEAs for implementing high quality work-based learning in their districts.

BUILDING QUALITY WORK-BASED LEARNING PROGRAMS

For more Tennessee students to successfully learn and model professional work expectations and behaviors, quality WBL programs must support experiences that foster skills-based learning. WBL experiences and programs must align with the Work-Based Learning Framework of the Tennessee State Board of Education as outlined in High School Policy 2.103. The diagram to the right outlines the layers of support needed to ensure quality WBL programs. The following chapter describes three levels of support needed to build quality WBL programs:

1. Skills-Based Student Learning
2. Quality Work-Based Learning Experiences
3. Quality Work-Based Learning Programs



1. Skills-Based Student Learning

Work-based learning in Tennessee — whether participation in career fairs or internships — will help students meet both academic and workplace standards. Tennessee teachers, administrators, counselors, and industry partners worked with the TDOE to identify key employability skills that students can and should learn through WBL experiences. These skills can be introduced and reinforced through all classes and WBL experiences from elementary school onward. By the time they are seniors, students can build on this foundation to model employability skills and professional behaviors, and demonstrate readiness for postsecondary education and careers through portfolios and presentations.

To organize and focus the skill development, students participating in WBL experiences will have a Personalized Learning Plan that addresses employability skills in the following categories:

- 1) Application of Academic and Technical Knowledge and Skills
- 2) Career Knowledge and Navigation Skills
- 3) 21st Century Learning and Innovation Skills
- 4) Personal and Social Skills

Employability skills should be introduced in earlier grades and reinforced as a student’s knowledge and skills grow. The **Employability Skills Checklist** reflects skills that were validated by Tennessee teachers, administrators, counselors, and industry partners as the most important skills that can be learned through work-based learning experiences. The checklist can be used to quickly identify which skills that can be introduced and reinforced through various WBL experiences. It also provides teachers with additional clarity regarding which skills are most important to evaluate through WBL experiences. While all WBL experiences should reinforce students’ skills from each category, the WBL coordinator and his/her industry partner should determine the expectations for student skill development.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Employability Skills Checklist: A list of the skills Tennessee industries identified as most important for WBL.

2. Quality Work-Based Learning Experiences

To help students learn these skills, experiences must be of high quality. High quality experiences are defined as having the following characteristics:

- 1) A **purposeful focus** on applied learning in preparation for postsecondary education and careers
- 2) **Learning outcomes** as the driver for designing experiences and Personalized Learning Plans
- 3) **Relevance** to student interests, their plan of study and learning goals
- 4) **Integration** with curriculum or connection to related instruction
- 5) Sufficient **variety** to provide exposure to multiple career options
- 6) Sufficient **depth** to allow for employability skill development and professional community engagement
- 7) Ongoing **interaction** with professionals from industry and the community
- 8) Close **supervision** from both teachers and employers
- 9) Opportunities for **reflection** and analysis
- 10) **Assessment** of student learning that is aligned with industry-specific expectations
- 11) **Alignment** with postsecondary and career opportunities regionally
- 12) **Documentation of student learning** through the development of artifacts and portfolios

3. Quality Work-Based Learning Programs

Teachers and employers can't do it alone! Structures and systems must be sufficient to support educator and employers in providing rigorous experiences to students. Quality programs provide:

- 1) **Sequenced experiences** to ensure preparation and "next steps"
- 2) **Coordination** of services among supervising teachers, counselors, and the WBL Coordinator(s)
- 3) **Partnerships** with postsecondary institutions, apprenticeships, and job training programs to facilitate successful transitions beyond high school
- 4) Adequate **staffing** of the work-based learning coordination function
- 5) School **schedules** that enable quality work-based learning and supervision

Example of a Quality Credit-Bearing Experience:

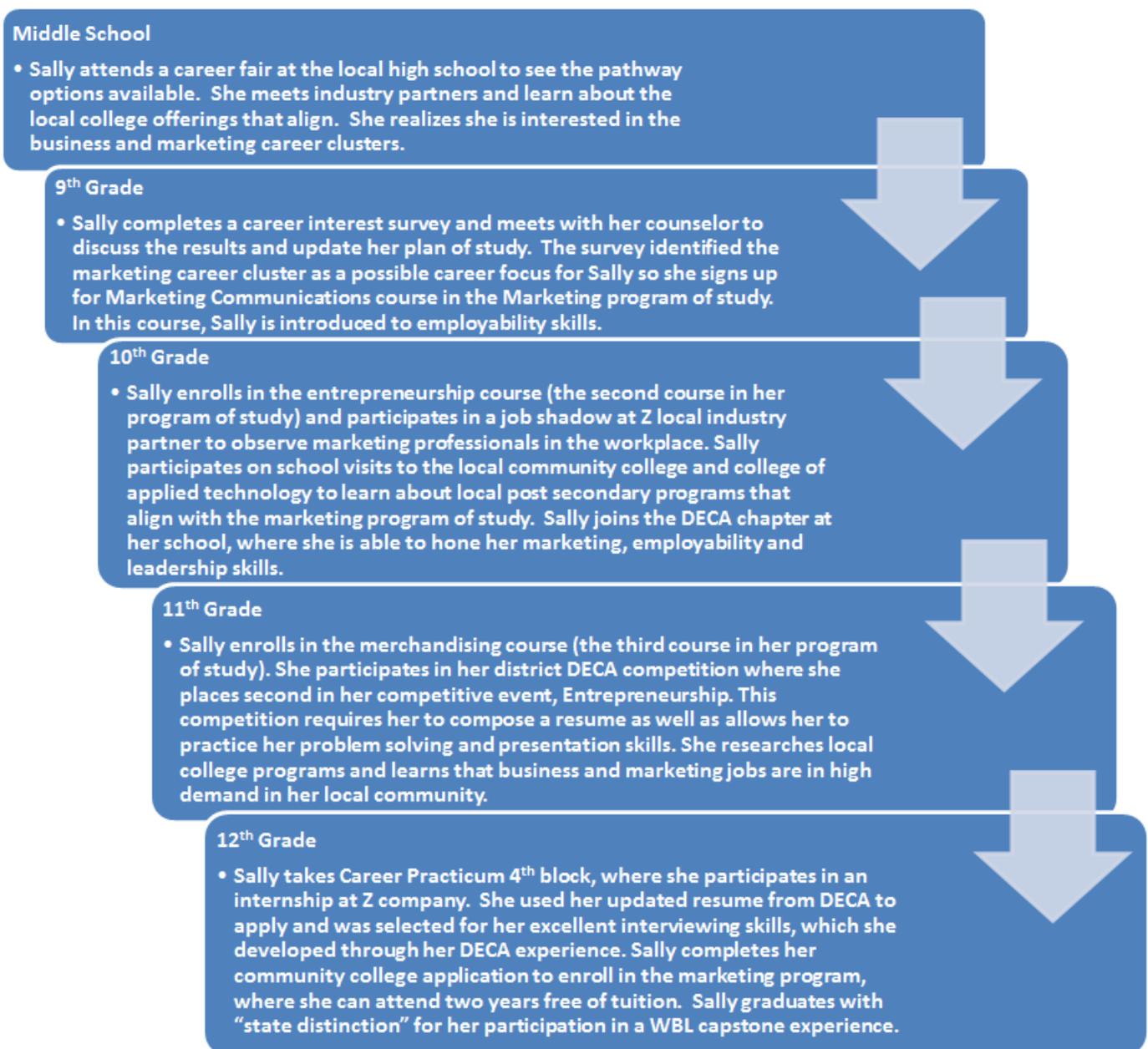
During his senior year, a student applies for a job at the local bank where he is able to apply the employability skills he learned through his business and finance CTE pathway. In addition to applying math skills, he is able to apply and demonstrate professionalism, ethics, and interpersonal skills, among others, and earn high school credit for graduation.

Example of a Quality WBL Program:

During the summer following her junior year a student applies for and secures an internship with an architecture firm. Her counselor recommended this WBL experience based on her interests and her talent for geometry and design. The student's professionalism and technology literacy, learned through her CTE class and SkillsUSA, made her a great candidate. By meeting the standards for the Work-Based Learning: Career Practicum course, the student earns high school credit over the summer and secures a letter of recommendation from her employer.

- 6) **Communication materials** to inform employers, students and parents of opportunities
- 7) **Technology** infrastructure to support placements, orientations, and actual WBL experiences
- 8) Tools, processes and documentation for **quality control** and compliance with legal requirements
- 9) **Community-based advisors** involved in program and experience planning and generating opportunities for students
- 10) **A culture** that values and supports WBL across the curriculum for all students
- 11) **Regionally-aligned pathways** with community-shared expectations for WBL experiences and learning outcomes
- 12) **Evaluative measures** that facilitate continuous program improvement

The following illustrates how a possible sequence of high-quality experiences indicates a quality WBL program:



4. Elective Focus and WBL

Tennessee graduation requirements include a three-credit progression in an area of “elective focus.” Credit-bearing, capstone work-based learning experiences taken through the *Work-Based Learning: Career Practicum* course may count toward this requirement when the experience aligns with the other courses taken in sequence. Students should use their chosen elective focus and their high school plan of study as the basis for their Career Practicum experience.

CTE Elective Focus

Students may meet the elective focus requirement by earning three credits in a CTE Program of Study or Career Cluster. Courses in a Career Cluster include those listed as part of a Program of Study as well as courses that are identified as cluster electives. The Work-Based Learning: Career Practicum course may substitute for Level 3 or 4 offerings in all CTE programs of study and counts toward status as a CTE concentrator. Students must participate in an aligned CTE program of study and/or other related courses prior to enrolling in the *Work-Based Learning: Career Practicum* course to earn capstone credit.

When the student is enrolled in a capstone-level WBL experience during the junior or senior year, a properly endorsed teacher related to the student’s CTE program of study or their area of elective focus should serve as the “endorsed teacher” as outlined in the WBL Policy Guide. This teacher plays an important role in ensuring that the student’s experience is safe and rigorously aligned with the content of their related courses. For more information about the role of the endorsed teacher, see the WBL Policy Guide chapter entitled *Roles and Responsibilities for WBL Program Management*.

Non-CTE Elective Focus

When the student’s elective focus is not in a CTE career cluster, work-based learning experiences should align with the other general education courses or electives taken in sequence to count toward the “elective focus” requirement. WBL experiences for credit must reflect the student’s long-term goals and interests and foster

Key Terms

Endorsed Teacher: *The “endorsed teacher” is the content area teacher with academic and technical knowledge related to the student’s placement. Endorsed teachers support Work-Based Learning Coordinators in ensuring that students meet skill standards and safety requirements. As such, they participate in the creation and approval of the student’s Personalized Learning Plan, which includes the student’s Safety Training Log to ensure industry standards are met as appropriate. They may participate in monitoring visits and provide input on in-class activities. In cases where placements are legally deemed “hazardous occupations”, endorsed teachers are required to sign off on all required documentation.*

Supervising Teacher: *The “supervising teacher” is any teacher using WBL methods as embedded strategies within their courses for the facilitation of career awareness and exploration. Supervising teachers are responsible for engaging “endorsed teachers” to ensure that students meet skill and safety requirements for specific industries and occupations.*

postsecondary and career preparation.

When the student is enrolled in a general education-related WBL experience, a properly endorsed general education teacher related to the student’s elective focus participates in the creation and approval of the student’s Personalized Learning Plan and Safety Training Log. This ensures strong alignment with subject area content and differentiates instruction for each student. For more information about the role of the endorsed teacher, see the WBL Policy Guide chapter entitled *Roles and Responsibilities for WBL Program Management*.

The next three chapters focus on implementation — preparing for WBL, during the experiences and after the experiences. They will provide guidance on steps to help ensure high quality experiences for students.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Sample WBL Calendar with Milestones: Sample calendar with key activities for the WBL Coordinator during the school year. Should be customized based on local district scheduling.

Building a WBL System: Key processes that support quality and safe student WBL experiences along the WBL Continuum.

Building a WBL System – Roles and Responsibilities: Defines the key roles that support quality and safe WBL experiences that prepare students for college and careers.

BEFORE: PREPARING FOR WORK-BASED LEARNING

To ensure successful work-based learning experiences for students and employers, teachers can lay the groundwork in several ways. The following section describes eight key steps in laying the groundwork for work-based learning:

1. Career Assessment, Counseling, and Planning
2. Building Sequenced Experiences
3. Focusing on Employability Skills to Ensure Learning¹
4. Collaborating With Employers to Meet Workforce Demands
5. Planning Classroom Assignments, Projects, and Assessments
6. Recruiting Employers and Building Strong Employer Relationships
7. Conducting A “Workplace Audit”
8. Demonstrating Student Readiness For Work-Based Learning

¹ The WBL Standards referenced here are for the *Work-Based Learning: Career Practicum* course; standards for other WBL courses may also apply.

1. Career Assessment, Counseling, and Planning

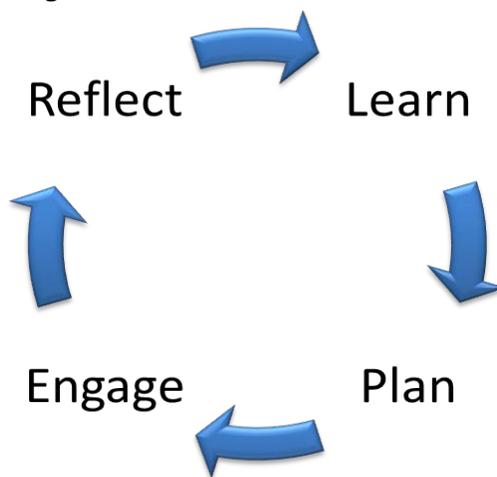
WBL and career assessment, counseling, and planning are closely intertwined. Self-knowledge and career exploration are necessary for student goal-setting and course selection. Earlier planning and awareness ensures that students will be more prepared to participate in high-level, credit-bearing WBL capstone experiences later in high school. Counselors and teachers can work together to:

- 1) facilitate career-related assessment and provide informational materials
- 2) facilitate understanding and planning
- 3) engage parents and promote dialogue between parents and students and/or peer and other mentor relationships around career exploration and goal-setting

High-quality WBL is supported by systematic career assessment and counseling. As described in the WBL Policy Guide, State policy (SBE High School Policy 2.103) requires students to have access to career assessment and counseling services prior to and during WBL experiences. Before entering high school, students complete a four-year plan of study, to be reviewed annually. Participation in WBL should align with students' academic and career goals as set in their plan of study and help them progress toward these goals.

Career assessment, counseling and planning may include the following activities:

- self-assessment exercises
- dialogue with peers and/or counselors
- goal-setting exercises
- introduction to job-seeking skills, including
 - research about career opportunities
 - resume-writing
 - networking and informational interviewing
 - formal interviewing
- introduction to various career options and pathways
- introduction to expected, ethical and desirable workplace behaviors



Student engagement in WBL supports career assessment and counseling by providing students with new information about their interests and skills. At the same time, career assessment and counseling support WBL, in helping students reflect on what they have learned, identify skills that may need further development, and update their plans. The cycle of learning, planning, engaging, and reflecting is illustrated in this graphic.

Coordination between Teachers and Counselors

Career assessment, counseling, and planning are critical to ensure that WBL experiences are meaningful for the student. Career awareness and career exploration activities are intended to spur students' thinking about options and their own interests. Students also need opportunities to document and reflect on their experiences in order to shape their ideas and goals. Facilitation of this reflection is the responsibility of the teacher or WBL coordinator as part of the classroom experiences that connect WBL to curriculum and students' goals. However, some of the assessment, counseling, and planning work will be the responsibility of the school counselor.

There are important reasons for including counselors in WBL planning:

- Students' experiences and interests contribute to course selections and decision-making about postsecondary options. As counselors track students' educational progress, it is important that they have up-to-date information about the student's interests and goals.
- Counselors can then help students update their plans and schedules. They can also encourage students in thoughtful ways and help them reflect on their experiences.
- Counselors have expertise in career development. Knowledge of career assessments and of counseling practices is important to promote the accurate interpretation of — and appropriate use of — results and information gleaned from conversations with students.
- Students may share their thoughts with a “neutral” counselor— a staff person who has no influence on grades — that they may not share with a teacher.



Example of a Counselor's Role in Supporting Reflection and Planning Based on WBL Experiences

After a job shadow in a hospital, a student decides that she doesn't want to be a doctor after all. The counselor can help the student understand what was and wasn't appealing, and that there are other options within the medical field that may be of interest, before the student decides to change directions altogether. The student might also have been discouraged by the amount of education required to become a doctor. The counselor can recommend a scaffolded approach that would enable the student to “take one step at a time” toward medical school with options for other certificates or employment opportunities along the way, while taking the requisite courses in high school that would allow the student to maintain a full range of options.

Career Assessment and Counseling

Schools use a number of tools to assess students' career interests. CollegeforTN.org is a public web portal offering career, high school and financial aid resources for students and their families. The site is customized to meet the needs of CTE directors, teachers and counselors and can be

integrated into classroom activities to help students make a plan of study for high school and beyond, create and manage an online portfolio, and create and update a resume.

Regardless of the system used, career assessment results should be used as a starting point for conversation about the careers associated with the student's interests and talents. Work-based learning provides the opportunity to explore interests and identify fulfilling career options.

Discussing results of career assessments and interests with students serves several important purposes:

- Students are empowered to take ownership of the results their own career path.
- Students learn the value of all their courses and see how their current studies will be used later in life.
- Students learn to focus on and master employability skills that can transfer across industry areas and are valuable in postsecondary education and careers.
- Students develop the ability to discuss how their skills transfer to a variety of contexts and will help them keep their options open.

Career and Educational Planning

As described above, students' career exploration should be reflected in their education and career plans, consistent with the new requirements of the Tennessee Board of Education. Plans should remain flexible, with students having the opportunity to regularly update the plans as they learn more about themselves and future options. Students' WBL reflections and portfolios (see below: "Assessing Student Skills and Reviewing Portfolio") can help students update their educational plans. LEAs may facilitate processes to ensure systematic communication between WBL coordinators and counseling sessions with students to ensure that plans are updated.

While remaining flexible, plans should also be firm enough to ensure that students stay "on track", especially when the "going gets tough".

Example of the Importance of Debriefing Assessment Results and Ongoing Exploration

A student's career assessment results suggest he explore pathways in marketing, accounting or finance. During a debrief conversation, the counselor learns the student's preference for marketing results from the student's idea of himself as "bad in math" and because he assumed that accounting was "boring". After an informational interview with an accountant, the student learns that his struggles in math can be overcome through tutoring and the topics that challenge him are not relevant to accounting.

While the student's parents assume that becoming an accountant requires a college education that is above their means, the counselor is able to share information about the local community college and scholarships available to support the student's goals.

Later, the student secures an internship with the local accounting firm that helps him see that he has the skills to succeed and that he feels comfortable in that workplace environment.

Early planning — before high school — can establish a general direction and ensure that students receive all the courses they need to enter postsecondary education and future careers. For this reason, the high school plan of study required by the state board should play a part in planning for WBL. Career exploration and WBL provide additional data for the plan of study, but should not derail a student. For example, discovering that little math was used in a particular WBL placement would not be sufficient reason to drop a math class. Rather, the plans can serve as a beacon for students to stay motivated in pursuit of challenging goals.

In addition, completing a WBL course contributes to the credits students can earn to fulfill their elective requirements for graduation. The Tennessee Diploma Project created the graduation requirement that students have three credits in an area of elective focus. Credit-bearing WBL courses can be used for these elective credits and help ensure that students are college and career ready.

Tennessee graduation requirements can be found at:

<https://tn.gov/education/topic/graduation-requirements>

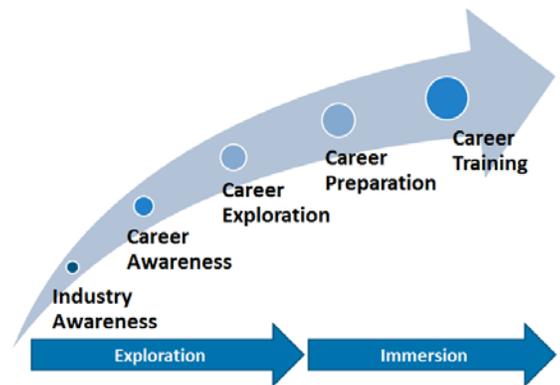
Engaging Parents

Parents and guardians play critical — if not the most critical — roles in helping students think about future options and realize their goals. In addition to offering career assessment and counseling as part of the students' educational planning, LEAs may encourage parents to assist students in discovering their unique strengths and interests. This may be done in the context of general informational meetings about the career exploration and WBL courses. It may also involve collaborating with parent organizations to offer educational workshops for parents.

For more information on the career counseling and development, see the National Career Development Guidelines at <http://www.ncda.org/aws/NCDA/pt/sp/guidelines>.

2. Building Sequenced Experiences

The full spectrum of WBL opportunities begins with classroom speakers and workplace tours and culminates in credit-bearing, “capstone” experiences such as internships and apprenticeships. According to the WBL Policy Guide, students should participate in awareness and exploration WBL experiences and reflect on what they learned to be prepared to participate in more advanced WBL experiences. Designing a progression of experiences serves several purposes: learning and development, equity and “reality checking,” and informed decision-making.



- 1) **Learning and skill development:** Offering a range of experiences enables students to develop employability skills over time. The WBL course standards set a high bar for student attainment of employability skills. However, just as students must master arithmetic before they can handle calculus, students must practice employability skills before they can exhibit mastery. For example, in the area of Career Knowledge and Navigation, through career speakers and job shadowing in the Industry Awareness, Career Awareness and Career Exploration phases, students will learn about the industries in their communities and the skills required to succeed in the related professions. They will also have the opportunity to reflect on their own interests and skills in relation to the skills needed in the workplaces they are learning about. This will then help them identify more advanced Career Preparation experiences and other courses where they can learn and apply the skills in real workplace settings. More information about introducing and building on these employability skills can be found under *“Using the WBL Standards to Ensure Learning”*.
- 2) **Equity and “reality checking”:** Starting with speakers, tours, and job shadows provides a relatively low-cost way to ensure that all students are exposed to options that they may not have heard or thought about. For example, manufacturing in Tennessee is clean and high tech, and offers interesting, high-paying jobs, in contrast to many people’s associations with manufacturing. A workplace tour can help bring this reality to life for students, providing them an opportunity to both see for themselves and ask questions. Seeding these ideas early enables the consideration of options to take root. This is particularly important when students are the first in their families to consider college or work options that their parents may not be aware of.
- 3) **Informed decision-making:** Exposing students to a variety of options early on allows them to make informed decisions about their future and work toward capstone WBL experiences. For example, if students learn about opportunities in manufacturing when they are 15 years old, they have time to consider these careers and prepare for future interviews and WBL experiences when they are 17 and 18 years old. There is also time to introduce parents to these options and to help families explore their financial options to support their children in the future. Each level of WBL is characterized by its own purposes, activities and outcomes.

A summary table of the work-based learning continuum of activities is provided on the following page.

Continuum of Activities

Type of Opportunity	Purpose	Sample Student Learning Outcome:	Experience Defined by...	Sample Experiences
Industry and Career Awareness	Build awareness of the variety of careers available and the role of postsecondary education; broaden student options.	Student can articulate the type of postsecondary education and training required in the career field and its importance to success in that field.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-time interaction with partner(s), often for a group of students Designed primarily by adults to broaden student's awareness of a wide variety of careers and occupations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workplace tour Guest speaker Career fair Visit parents at work
Career Exploration	Explore career options and postsecondary requirements for purpose of motivation and to inform decision-making in high school and postsecondary education	Student can give at least two examples of how the student's individual skills and interests relate to the career field and/or occupations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-time interaction with partner(s) for a single student or small group Personalized to connect to emerging student interests Student takes an active role in selecting and shaping the experience Depth in particular career fields Builds skills necessary for in-depth work-based learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informational interview Job shadow Virtual exchange with a partner
Career Preparation	Apply learning through practical experience that develops knowledge and skills necessary for success in careers and postsecondary education.	Student works effectively as a member of a team, with respect for diverse perspectives and strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct interaction with partners over time Application of skills transferable to a variety of careers Activities have consequences and value beyond success in the classroom Learning for the student and benefit to the partner are equally valued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated project with multiple interactions with professionals Student-run enterprise with partner involvement Technical mentoring through online interactions with partners Projects with partners through industry student organizations Service learning and social enterprises with partners Compensated internship connected to curriculum
Career Training	Train for employment and/or postsecondary education in a specific range of occupations.	Student demonstrates knowledge and skills specific to employment in a range of occupations in a career field.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interaction with partners over extended period of time Benefit to the partner is primary and learning for student is secondary Develop mastery of occupation specific skills. Complete certifications or other requirements for a specific range of occupations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internship required for credential or entry to occupation Apprenticeship Clinical experience On-the-job training

The Continuum of Activities as a Learning Progression

A learning progression is a pathway composed of building blocks that students travel as they progress toward mastery of employability skills. The activity types in the continuum of activities shown on page 16 can be interpreted as building blocks of a learning progression. Industry and career awareness experiences prepare students for meaningful career exploration experiences. Career exploration experiences prepare students for career preparation experiences, and career preparation experiences prepare students for career training experiences. Put another way, students first need exposure to ideas, then opportunities for exploration in which they take an active role, and finally opportunities for more in-depth hands-on application of classroom knowledge in real world settings through rigorous, standards-aligned, credit-bearing capstone experiences.

To illustrate this idea, the Career Knowledge and Navigation Skills document in the WBL Toolbox shows examples of what students should know and be able to do at each of three levels along the continuum of WBL experiences as they progress toward mastery of the standard for Career Knowledge and Navigation Skills. LEAs may modify this array of expectations as needed, but the aim is that students attain the standards by the end of a credit-bearing course at the Career Preparation/Training level. For example,

- **At the Industry/Career Awareness and Career Exploration levels**, students completing a tour or job shadow might be expected to provide examples of career options presented by the employer, to complete a reflection on what was learned, and begin assembling any artifacts into a multi-year portfolio.
- **At the Career Preparation/Training level**, for credit-bearing capstone experiences students would be expected to meet WBL course standards. At this level, they would be expected to display broader and deeper knowledge, and to link learning directly to their education and career plans, including identification of postsecondary programs that would enable them to fulfill their goals. The resume would not only be more robust, but more nuanced, reflecting greater self-knowledge and clarity of goals. The portfolio would have a complete set of entries, including a writing sample that reflects research and careful analysis of options.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Building Career Knowledge and Navigation Skills along the WBL Spectrum: Identifies skills associated with “Career Knowledge and Navigation” as may be demonstrated at each level of the continuum. This developmental approach should be taken with all of the employability skills as the student engages in the continuum of experiences.

Types of Activities along the WBL Continuum: Outlines the purpose, learning outcomes, and activities at various stages along the WBL Continuum.

3. Focusing on Employability Skills to Ensure Learning

WBL course standards serve as the backbone of quality, capstone work-based learning experiences. The standards ensure that students are demonstrating rigorous skill development that is differentiated to meet the needs of the student and match the learning environment. They form the basis for the students' Personalized Learning Plans and assessments to ensure that participating students are adequately prepared for postsecondary opportunities and careers. The WBL course standards focus on the critical employability skills that are applicable in all work environments. The skills students demonstrate will look different in various contexts, but are transferrable to any postsecondary education or work environment.

Just as for any course, the standards need to be analyzed and systematically integrated into instruction to ensure learning. In work-based learning courses, this means identifying the skills that students will be expected to learn through the experience and what kinds of opportunities they will have to practice and demonstrate each standard. It also means promoting the transfer of learning by addressing the content or context in which the skills are being learned and providing opportunities for students to examine how the skills can be applied to other content or in other contexts.

Identifying Skills to be Addressed through the WBL Experience

Below is provided a list of employability skills from the *Work-Based Learning: Career Practicum* standards with examples of how they could be practiced and demonstrated through a work-based learning experience. The skills outlined below were identified by Tennessee teachers, administrators, counselors, and industry partners as the most important skills that can be learned through work-based learning experiences — expanding, deepening and complementing skills learned in school. By practicing professional communication in the workplace, experiencing collaborative projects, and opportunities to solve challenging problems, students can demonstrate the employability skills that will help prepare them for postsecondary and career opportunities. These experiences also help students develop the motivation and initiative needed to persist and succeed in the face of challenging new opportunities.

These skills are included in WBL course standards, but may be reinforced through stand-alone activities such as job shadows or career fairs. Regardless of the type of experience, students should have an intentional experience to help them practice and demonstrate these skills. The employability skills list on the following page suggests the kinds of evidence that students might use to demonstrate these skills at the Career Exploration level after having participated in a job shadow where they talked with staff in the workplace. Note that at the career awareness and exploration levels, students are learning *about* industries and workplace, though they have opportunities to demonstrate some of these skills at school. At the career preparation and training levels, students demonstrate these skills at the workplace through full engagement with workplace tasks and projects.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Employability Skills Checklist – Using Checklist to Facilitate Student Learning: Identifies activities that may be used to help students reflect on their skills and set goals for their learning.

Employability Skill	How Demonstrated (Examples from a Job Shadow at the Career Exploration level)
Application of Academic Knowledge and Skills	
<input type="checkbox"/> LITERACY: Read and comprehend relevant academic and technical texts	<p>Provide at least two examples of the kinds of reading and writing skills that are required in a particular industry, such as the reading of manuals or background information to prepare for a meeting.</p> <p>Prepare a writing sample to grade-level standards that displays the kind of reading and writing skill that would be appropriate to the industry of interest.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> MATH: Select and apply relevant mathematical concepts to solve problems and perform expected tasks	<p>Provide at least two examples of the kinds of mathematics skills required in a particular industry or career area such as closing out a cash register or measuring liquids in a laboratory.</p> <p>Demonstrate grade-level math standards pertinent to industry focus, e.g. measurement in construction or engineering or fractions in culinary arts.</p>
Application of Industry-Focused Knowledge and Technical Skills	
<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC TECHNICAL SKILLS: Demonstrate industry-specific technical skills	<p>Provide at least two examples of the kinds of technical skills required in a particular industry. Describe those that the student already has and those that still need to be learned.</p> <p>In a CTE class, demonstrate grade-level appropriate technical skill relevant to the industry.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC SAFETY SKILLS: Demonstrate adherence to industry-specific safety regulations	<p>Describe the importance of safety regulations in a particular industry or occupation, and the specific safety measures observed or discussed at the job shadow site.</p> <p>Document a personal experience when student employed safety measures, such as in cooking or transportation, and how the learning from this experience is relevant to the workplace.</p>
Career Knowledge and Navigation Skills	
<input type="checkbox"/> UNDERSTANDING PATHS AND OPTIONS: Plan and navigate education and career paths aligned with personal goals	<p>Interview staff at the job shadow site about the education needed for careers in the industry; document what is discussed and analyze relevance to student's own plans.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> PLANNING: Develop and implement a Personalized Learning Plan	<p>Document how the student's own skills, interests and goals align with the industry or career area, based on what was learned during an informational interview in the workplace.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> REFLECTION: Reflect on experiences through creation of a personal portfolio	<p>Document and gather information (using text, photos) about the student's skills and accomplishments to date, including reflections on the Informational interview conducted during a job shadow, to begin populating a multi-year portfolio.</p>

21st Century Learning and Innovation Skills	
<input type="checkbox"/> CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION: Use imagination and insight to develop original ideas for products, including physical products, services, and solutions to problems, among others	<p>Document how creativity and innovation are observed or discussed during the job shadow.</p> <p>Document past demonstrations of creativity, such as participation in a brainstorming session at school, and how these skills might be developed, based on what was observed during the job shadow.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> CRITICAL THINKING & PROBLEM SOLVING: Reason effectively, analyze problems and solutions, solve problems using systems thinking	<p>Document how critical thinking and problem-solving are observed during the job shadow, citing at least two observed examples, such as helping a customer solve a problem or analyzing manufacturing specifications.</p> <p>Document past demonstrations of critical thinking and problem-solving, such as participation in debates at school, and how these skills might be developed, based on what was observed during the job shadow.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATION: Articulate ideas effectively in both oral and written communications; listen effectively	<p>Document how communication skills are observed during the job shadow, citing at least two examples such as a meeting and a presentation.</p> <p>Document past demonstrations of communication, such as participation in a presentation at school, and how these skills might be developed, based on what was observed during the job shadow.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> COLLABORATION: Work effectively as a member of a team, with respect for diverse perspectives and strengths; demonstrate leadership and meeting management skills	<p>Document how collaboration skills are observed during the job shadow, citing at least two examples such as a project work session and a multi-team conference call.</p> <p>Document past demonstrations of collaboration, such as a team project at school, and how these skills might be developed, based on what was observed during the job shadow.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> INFORMATION LITERACY: Access and evaluate Information, manage information accurately and ethically	<p>Document how information literacy skills are observed during the job shadow and cite at least two examples such as internet search and a filing system.</p> <p>Document past demonstrations of information literacy, such as internet research at school, and how these skills might be developed, based on what was observed during the job shadow.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> ICT (Information, Communications and Technology) LITERACY: Use technology effectively and appropriately	<p>Document how ICT skills are observed during the job shadow and cite at least two examples such as web site development and use of media.</p> <p>Document past demonstrations of ICT skills, such as development of a video at school, and how these skills might be developed, based on what was observed during the job shadow.</p>
Personal and Social Skills	
<input type="checkbox"/> INITIATIVE AND SELF-DIRECTION: Work independently; demonstrate agency, curiosity, and the ability to learn	<p>Document how initiative and self-direction are observed or discussed during the job shadow and cite at least two examples such as how an employee signed up for extra training to improve her skills.</p> <p>Document past demonstrations of initiative and self-direction, such as how the student helped another student at school without being asked, or conducted additional research beyond what was assigned; document how these skills might be developed, based on what was observed during the job shadow.</p>

<input type="checkbox"/> PROFESSIONALISM, ETHICS, AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS: Demonstrate reliability, integrity, responsibility, proper etiquette, and ethical behavior	<p>Document how professionalism, ethics, and interpersonal skills are observed or discussed during the job shadow and cite at least two examples such as how an employee maintained poise under stress or returned promptly to work after lunch or a break.</p> <p>Document past demonstrations of professionalism, ethics, and interpersonal skills, such as how the student maintained good relations with fellow students or maintained excellent attendance; document how these skills might be developed, based on what was observed during the job shadow.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> CULTURAL AND GLOBAL COMPETENCE: Exhibit interpersonal and social skills that are respectful of cultural differences	<p>Document how cultural and global competence are observed or discussed during the job shadow and cite at least two examples such as how employees worked effectively with colleagues from cultures different from their own or how company staff interacted with colleagues and clients in other parts of the world.</p> <p>Document past demonstrations of cultural and global competence, such as effective interactions with fellow students from cultures different from their own or reached out to learn about international issues affecting the industry of interest; document how these skills might be developed, based on what was observed during the job shadow.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> ADAPTABILITY AND FLEXIBILITY: Adapt flexibly to roles and responsibility; work effectively with ambiguity; change course as needed	<p>Document how adaptability and flexibility are observed or discussed during the job shadow and cite at least two examples such as how employees changed their plans when a deadline was moved.</p> <p>Document past demonstrations of adaptability and flexibility, such as flexibility in completing a project when a deadline shifted; document how these skills might be developed, based on what was observed during the job shadow.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> PRODUCTIVITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY: Set goals and priorities and manage time and projects; exhibit punctuality, persistence, and precision and accuracy; complete projects to agreed-upon standards	<p>Document how productivity and accountability are observed or discussed during the job shadow and cite at least two examples such as how employees completed projects on time and to high quality standards.</p> <p>Document past demonstrations of productivity and accountability, such as timely completion of high quality projects at school, and how these skills might be developed, based on what was observed during the job shadow.</p>

The WBL Coordinator and student work together (with the employer where appropriate) to develop a Personalized Learning Plan to “map” how the student will have the opportunity to practice and demonstrate these skills during the experience. For more information on developing a Personalized Learning Plan, see the Chapter entitled “During: Implementing WBL Experiences” and refer to the section called “*Developing Personalized Learning Plans and Work-Based Learning Agreements.*”

Ensuring Transfer of Skills

In the current ever-changing global economy, the ability to identify and apply transferable skills is paramount. This involves understanding how employability skills are applied in a variety of contexts, using various kinds of knowledge. Alignment of experiences with the standards helps ensure the transferability of skills learned to various contexts, regardless of the WBL course code.

In general education and CTE classes, knowledge includes academic or technical content delivered during class time. In the case of work-based learning, the content knowledge is primarily determined by the employer and is often delivered in the workplace. There are many types of workplace knowledge, including:

- 1) Knowledge about careers options, career development concepts, writing resumes, the local job market, and generally appropriate workplace behaviors — Careers 101!
- 2) Knowledge about the industry or occupations in which the student is exploring or working, e.g., agriculture, engineering or hospitality
- 3) Basic technical knowledge, such as tool safety, principles of engineering, or culinary skill
- 4) Knowledge about the particular workplace and workplace expectations for the experience that the student is undertaking, e.g. hours of operation, standards of safety or quality, the company mascot
- 5) Knowledge related to specific “problems to solve”, for example, designing a new brochure, providing good customer service, making a robot work

When students are in a WBL class, teachers and students can identify the content knowledge that they will focus on in the experience. Based on the “Workplace Learning Audit” described in a later section on that subject, the WBL Coordinator will consider the industry, the type of technical skills to be employed, the kind of workplace and the types of “problems” or work tasks the students may face. This information will help the WBL Coordinator and student

Example of Skill Transfer

A student may do an extended job shadow in an insurance company. The technical knowledge and skills include how the insurance company operates and how to process claims. At the end of the experience, the student may decide that he/she does not want to work in the insurance field. By encouraging the student to do additional research into a variety of industries and complete a facilitated reflection exercise, the teacher helps the student identify ways to use his/her skills in other contexts. These skills may include analytical and problem-solving skills and math skills that could be applied in a hospital setting — even though the student had never thought of a career at a healthcare facility. Classroom research on the growing biotech industry piques the student’s interest in an internship at a local biotech firm where she is able to use her analytical skills as a lab assistant. She also plans to take chemistry at the local community college, instead of the business courses she had planned to take. The WBL experience has been well worth the effort, not only in identifying “what the student does NOT want to do” — a worthy result in itself — but in enabling the student to transfer learning and skills to a new context. The student was also armed with self-knowledge and awareness of new career options.

develop the Personalized Learning Plan. See *“Developing Personalized Learning Plans and Work-Based Learning Agreements”* under *DURING: IMPLEMENTING WBL EXPERIENCES*.

Often in work-based learning, the focus is on categories 4 and 5, (knowledge about a particular workplace and knowledge related to specific “problems”) with emphasis on the immediate tasks at hand. Knowledge in categories 1, 2, and 3 (career options, industries, and technical issues) is usually covered more at school than in the workplace. The focus on the immediate workplace and activities can yield important learning as students delve deeply into the particularities of a given worksite and set of issues, especially if they have the opportunity to develop relationships at the workplace that add a social-emotional dimension to the learning. Learning and future career success can be further enhanced, however, if teachers can stretch students to think about the employability skills they are developing and how these can be applied in other settings, drawing on students’ own research in content categories 1, 2, and 3 — the broader areas of knowledge.

For more information on using reflective exercises to help promote students' understanding of skill transfer, refer to the section on ongoing documentation of reflection under *“Facilitating Learning in the Classroom”*.

4. Collaborating with Employers to Meet Workforce Demands

Input from employers is as critical to preparing WBL course curriculum, just as input from any group of experts is needed to shape state and local curricula. In the case of career-related education and work-based learning, regular input may even be more critical, as changes in workplace demands are ongoing.

The Tennessee work-based learning standards were developed with direct input from Tennessee employers and workforce development staff. Knowledge of the variety of industries offering WBL experiences will enable teachers to guide students and speak to employers to ensure that students have access to the opportunities that will build a broad range of skills. However, some industries place greater importance on some skill sets than others; knowledge of these industry-specific needs is also important. Further, if a community is home to a major industry or employer that will be providing many of the opportunities for students — whether job shadowing, intensive experiences as part of a Career Practicum course, or future employment — close communication with the employer community will enable the teacher to prepare students to learn and demonstrate those skills that are particularly valuable in that industry.

There are many ways to connect with employers to ensure that students' experiences match future workplace demand — and that Tennessee students are meeting standards:

- 1) teacher job shadows and externships;
- 2) communication with employers through intentional outreach or advisory boards; and
- 3) collaboration with Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA) offices.

In addition, ongoing communication during teachers' monitoring visits to workplaces can provide insights that will benefit all students.

Regardless of the approach, the intention is to promote systematic communication between industry and educators, so that teachers have input on skill needs and feedback on the preparedness of their students. Administrators can also benefit from systematic communication through such venues as chambers of commerce and civic organizations. Such interactions will enable administrators to support teachers in preparing students for postsecondary education, careers, and civic life while bringing visibility to the school and building the workforce pipeline for growing Tennessee industries.

TN: Promising Practice

Hamblen County – 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.

To learn more about how Hamblen County has accomplished this, see our Promising Practices site and look for “Work Ethics Diploma.”
<https://www.tn.gov/education/topic/promising-practices-in-ccr>

Teacher Job Shadows and Externships

Teacher job shadowing and externships are an effective way for teachers to build knowledge about workplaces and future skills demands. In an externship, teachers spend a week to several months in a workplace, ideally taking on real project and integrating themselves to the extent possible into the workplace community. The purpose of the externship is:

- 1) To obtain a first-hand view of the occupational options, labor market needs, activities and tasks performed, skill requirements, career development ladders, standards, problems encountered, and opportunities for student learning in a targeted industry or career area, through direct experience in a company or organization
- 2) To translate this learning into enhanced, integrated curriculum, teaching methods, and work-based learning opportunities for students
- 3) To build relationships with key employers who will later open their doors to students and/or other teachers, or otherwise work with the schools
- 4) To pilot processes, tools and materials for use with other teachers and employers in the future

The expectation is that curricula developed will be implemented in the teacher's own classroom and shared with other teachers.

Outreach to Industry Advisors

The most efficient way for teachers to stay abreast of the particular skill needs of local employers is to interact with a cadre of advisors who can inform teachers of industry trends. This can happen through ongoing connections with individual advisors or organizations, for example, with the local chamber of commerce. It can also happen through the formation of a formal advisory board for the work-based learning program and through the assistance of the LWIA office.

Industry advisors, whether individually or as part of a board, can provide critical input on skill needs and feedback to teachers on the preparedness of their students. They can also provide input on the programmatic issues, such as logistics to facilitate employer participation, compiling and reviewing the input that individual employers provide at the end of particular work-based learning experiences. (See *"Employer Satisfaction Survey"* under *AFTER: ASSESSING SKILLS AND EVALUATING PROGRAMS.*)

For example, in manufacturing, some math skills may feature more prominently than they do in some service occupations. Math skills needed in manufacturing may also emphasize key concepts that are not emphasized

TN: Promising Practice

Bradley County – *The vision was to create a program where teachers could spend a few weeks in the summer working with local companies and then use that experience to create new lesson plans, to build stronger employer relationships and to promote student readiness across the curriculum.*

To learn more about how Bradley County has used teacher team externships, see our Promising Practices site and look for "Teacher Externships."
<https://www.tn.gov/education/topic/promising-practices-in-ccr>

in some classes, such as statistics. Teachers' understanding of these requirements will enable them to work with students and colleagues to help ensure that students are prepared for WBL and future careers. It will also help them work with employers to develop Personalized Learning Plans with their students that spotlight exposure to the application of key math concepts. While students may not master all these concepts through WBL, exposure to these requirements in a hands-on, interesting setting provides students with a) increased motivation to pay attention in their math classes at school, and b) critical information to include in their postsecondary planning.

Establishing a sense of joint and mutual responsibility for students' progress and success is key. This may require a shift in focus from WBL activities to WBL outcomes. Meetings may include a review of student work and student outcome data, such as student assessment scores and other measures, in addition to other advisory activities. Advisory Board members may also directly observe student work and serve as key participants on panels to hear and evaluate student presentations.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Fifteen Steps to Developing and Sustaining Advisory Boards and Program Partnerships: A checklist of successful practices for starting and supporting advisory boards.

WBL 101 for Industry: An introduction to WBL for industry partners to help share the goals of work-based learning and address some of the biggest questions that industries have about working with minors.

Advisory Board Recruitment Letter: A sample letter to local employers to generate interest in serving on a local advisory board.

Collaborating with LWIA Offices

Collaboration with Local Workforce Investment Area offices can help facilitate support to engage with local and regional employers. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), effective July 1, 2015, provides for training assistance and the development of local pathways to ensure regional economic development. WIOA promotes the use of career pathways and sector partnerships to increase employment in in-demand industries and occupations. As a result, LWIA offices can provide valuable assistance driving business engagement within the K-14 education system and are called to help fund and support work experience that has an academic and occupational education component, or WBL. More information about LWIA offices can be found at the following webpage: <https://www.jobs4tn.gov/jobbanks/vosofficelist.asp?pu=n>

5. Planning Classroom Assignments, Projects, and Assessments

Key student activities and assignments should supplement any WBL experience to support skills-based learning and “portfolio” development to build and provide evidence of those skills. Some planning is required in advance of implementation. The activities themselves are discussed in greater detail later in this section under “*Demonstrating Student Readiness for WBL*”, and under *DURING: “Facilitating Learning in the Classroom”*, and again under *AFTER: “Assessing Student Skills and Reviewing Portfolios”*. The list of suggested learning activities below includes the types of activities that can facilitate and allow students to demonstrate their learning. LEAs may select all or some of these activities depending on how much time students spend in the classroom; the more robust the activities, the greater the learning.

For credit-bearing experiences, it is recommended that students meet as a class periodically. This will enable the WBL Coordinator to facilitate student reflections and the development of student portfolios. If students are not able to be in the classroom regularly, the WBL Coordinator should speak with the employer to ensure that the students are meeting course standards through their activities. Alternatively, the WBL Coordinator may require that students submit regular reflection papers electronically. These reflections serve as a formative assessment that can help the WBL Coordinator facilitate strong learning outcomes.

For example, in addition to completing basic line tasks at the worksite, the WBL Coordinator may arrange with the employer for the student to shadow various employees and take on a special project that is both of benefit to the employer and of learning value to the student. Projects might include designing a menu or brochure, developing a survey to ask youth about a particular product or service, developing a website, or developing a budget using Excel.

In planning the flow of activities, WBL Coordinators should consult with endorsed teachers to ensure that students develop all key skills for specific industries or occupations.

Suggested Learning Activities

TN: Promising Practice

Rutherford County – *The vision was to create a series of weekly lesson plans that would help students progress through the course standards while developing artifacts that would ultimately go into a portfolio. Locally developed professional development ensures consistency across the district and sets expectations for quality portfolios. As a result, student portfolios reflect rigorous expectations for student growth in TN’s targeted employability skills.*

To learn more about how Rutherford County has accomplished this, see our Promising Practices site and look for “WBL: Weekly Projects Result in Student Portfolios.”
<https://www.tn.gov/education/top/ic/promising-practices-in-ccr>

WBL TOOLBOX: Below you will find a suggested list of activities that may result in artifacts for the student portfolio. For most of these activities, there is a sample or guide in the WBL Toolbox.

Career Development Materials

- Updating of career and educational development plans/high school plan of study (this will in most cases be the same plan of study as developed with the counselor, but if not, should be coordinated)
- Resume development

Readiness Activities (See *“Demonstrating Student Readiness for Work-Based Learning”* below)

- Pre-assessments of skills (student initial completion of **Student Self-Assessment of Skills for Capstone WBL**)
- Research on industries and workplaces of interest (see **Pre-Experience Research Checklist**)
- Student documentation of prior experiences, interests and learning objectives (see **Student WBL Profile**)
- Student interview of prospective employer WBL host regarding employability skills that can be learned in the workplace (see **Skills Interview Guide for Students**)

Documentation of Progress During the Experience

- Log of responsibilities undertaken throughout the experience
- Periodic reflections or journal entries reflecting on tasks and activities (See sample **Student Reflection Questions**)

Practicing Workplace Skills with Feedback from Teachers and Peers

- Identification of skills that students may need to reinforce through additional practice in the classroom (based on students’ self- assessments and input from employers and endorsed teachers.)

Work Products

- Documentation of materials developed throughout the experience linked to standards and student’s Personalized Learning Plan (See suggested **Portfolio Components-Suggested**)
- Writing Exercises to demonstrate in-depth knowledge about a career area, describing skill needs and future trends in the industry; use of multiple sources (interviews, literature review and internet search) with proper citations, will demonstrate research/knowning how to learn, information literacy, and written communication skills
- Project presentation, encompassing both work samples, and writing samples, and reflection

Assessments

- Student Self-Assessment at the end of the experience (See suggested **Student Self-Assessment of Skills for Capstone WBL**)
- Reflection on Supervisor Assessment (See suggested **Student Skills Assessment Rubric**), to enable to student to integrate and learn from the results

Updating of Career Development Materials

- Updating of career and educational development plans

- Resume update
- For seniors: development of an application for college, including a personal essay that may draw on the students' work-based learning experiences
- Application for employment
- Drafts of letters of recommendation that students would want an esteemed reference to write for them, based on the students' accomplishments

6. Recruiting Employers and Building Strong Employer Relationships

Research has shown that in general, employers want to help students learn but they need to be asked! They want things to be simple and clear — use your elevator speech!

Connecting with Employers

There are several ways to connect with employers. Just as in job-hunting, cold calling is probably the least effective. Strategies that have been used to good effect include:

- **Use peer-to-peer outreach.** Use the advisory board or existing partners to recruit employers on your behalf. They speak the same language as their colleagues.
- **Participate in employer and civic organizations.** Attend — or send a representative to — the chamber of commerce, Rotary, and other meetings where economic and civic issues are discussed. Let the community know what you are doing and how your school can keep students engaged and build the workforce pipeline. Invite the mayor or local politicians to observe your students in action.
- **Start small.** Invite employers to be speakers or offer tours to get started. This will give them a chance to see that your students are interested, attentive, and eager to learn. In focus groups, employers say they are most concerned with students' attitudes; if students have a desire to learn, employers are willing to help!
- **Make sure it is easy for employers to engage.** Be sure that employers understand: (a) what is required (in simple form, but with all the legal bases covered), (b) where to find you (if they are coming to campus), and (c) how to contact you.

Develop your Elevator Pitch!

Educator and employers describe similar concepts differently! Educators talk about “work-based learning” while employers talk about work experience and jobs. In addition, employers have limited time; they want to know quickly what you are looking for and how they can help. Come up with a 30 second “elevator pitch” that summarizes:

- *What do you want an employer to do for you? (such as host a job shadow or hire an intern)*
- *What qualities do your students bring to the business? (such as motivation, maturity, and an interest in their industry)*
- *How will working with your students benefit the company?*

Now practice! It should sound natural so you can easily share it with a stranger in the bank or grocery store.

WBL TOOLBOX: Tools are included below that may be compiled into an employer packet for WBL.

Elevator Pitch Activity: Guides teachers or students through the writing of a clear, concise elevator pitch.

Employer WBL Packet Cover Letter: Sample letter to customize.

WBL 101 for Industry: An introduction to WBL for industry partners to help share the goals of work-based learning and address some of the biggest questions that industries have about working with minors.

Myths vs. Facts for Industry: A quick reference of state legislation pertaining to working with minors.

Employability Skills Checklist: A list of the skills Tennessee industries identified as most important for WBL.

Safety Training Log: Part of the Personalized Learning Plan Packet.

Work-Based Learning Agreement: Part of the Personalized Learning Plan Packet.

Internship Orientation Checklist: A quick reference tool for employers.

Developing an Employer Profile and Maintaining an Employer Database

Once employers have been recruited, a profile of their organization, contact information, and the opportunities they offer should be completed and logged electronically if possible. This can be tracked in a simple spreadsheet. This practice will facilitate the matching of students with opportunities. It will also house a record of contacts and log the history of engagement so that continuity can be maintained with the employer.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Employer Profile: Sample tool is provided in the WBL Toolbox.

Building on Existing Relationships

The best way to keep employers interested is for them to have good experiences. That doesn't mean teachers have to send only their most capable students into workplaces. But employers will appreciate consistent, clear, streamlined processes, materials, communication and support.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Fifteen Steps to Developing and Sustaining Advisory Boards and Program Partnerships: A checklist of successful practices for starting and supporting advisory boards.

Principles for Sustaining Employer Partnerships: Quick reference guide.

7. Conducting a “Workplace Learning Audit”

Before sending students to the workplace and developing their Personalized Learning Plans, it is important for teachers to know if and how students will be able to attain the WBL standards through their experience. The best way to identify learning opportunities in the workplace and their alignment with standards is to visit the workplace and do what is called a “workplace-learning audit”.

Observations in the workplace before students are placed, called “workplace learning audits” by Jobs for the Future (2001), enable teachers to have a full understanding of the learning potential in a given workplace, informed by first-hand experience and conversations with employers. Alignment of the skills and knowledge to be gained at the workplace to WBL standards is the next step. This alignment has long been a tenet of high-quality work-based learning. The link can also be made both to the academic and CTE standards, ensuring that work-based learning furthers the goal of success for all students.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Workplace Learning Audit: Sample form provided. A form to assist the WBL Coordinator in determining whether a location will provide an appropriate learning environment for a student.

The workplace learning audit process is not complex, but may require a robust conversation and/or tour of the workplace. The tool provided is divided into three sections that address *WBL: Career Practicum (6105)* course standards in different ways:

- A. **Skills and Knowledge at Work:** opportunities to see how the standards are manifested in a particular context
- B. **Problems and Projects at Work:** opportunities for students to use their skills in solving real problems that ideally involve working with others
- C. **Opportunities and Resources at Work:** activities that students can participate in to build their skills

The process ends with the opportunity for teachers to note their thoughts for curriculum development based on their observations. Whenever possible, WBL Coordinators should discuss their ideas with endorsed teachers.

As noted, the tool can be used in full or in part depending on the amount of time teachers have at the worksite. Teachers and other staff can work individually or in a team. If time at a worksite is limited, participants can complete Part C later. Often companies may wish to follow up with you to discuss this final component once they have had time to discuss these opportunities with their coworkers.

Teacher Externships

Workplace Learning Audits often occur in the context of Teacher Externships. As described in the section “*Collaborating with Employers to Meet Workforce Demands*” in BEFORE: PREPARING FOR WORK-BASED LEARNING, externships allow teachers to see for themselves how the standards are implemented in the “real world.”

8. Demonstrating Student Readiness for Work-Based Learning

Students must be prepared to engage with employers and participate in WBL for at least two reasons: to ensure that they are ready to take advantage of the learning opportunities at the workplace; and so they know enough about the organization to be able to participate constructively in workplace practices and adhere to workplace norms. This Implementation Guide highlights three steps in the determination of student readiness for work-based learning: The student self-assessment of skills, completion of research about the industry and careers of interest, and completion of a student's WBL profile, including long-term goals and learning objectives. This approach supports the Tennessee WBL policy that students must exhibit work-readiness attitudes and skills before beginning a WBL experience.

Ideally, students would demonstrate readiness in several ways:

- They show that they are sufficiently aware of their own skills to be able to set realistic goals for learning.
- They demonstrate sufficient knowledge about the industry and workplace to be able to navigate and build on what they have learned; they understand the industry context.
- They have had prior experiences that validate their interest in the new experience and enable them to identify specific and realistic learning objectives.
- They have made some contact with the prospective employer and documented the skills they will have the opportunity to learn and demonstrate through tasks and activities at the workplace.

In addition, even before students are ready to engage in a formal Practicum experience, one way students can learn about a particular organization or industry is through the informational interview. This is a standard career development strategy that enables students — or any job seeker or career changer — to learn firsthand about an organization or career of interest, by interviewing a staff person of that organization. Customarily, the interview takes from 15-20 minutes, so is not time consuming for the employer. Employers generally enjoy speaking to young people about their work. The interview covers information about the organization, how the individual attained his/her position, the kinds of education and training required for the position and in other parts of the organization, daily activities, and opportunities for learning.

WBL Readiness Activities Linked to Skills

The more often students have the opportunity to practice linking their early experiences to the Employability Skills, and to practice assessing their own work in relation to defined standards and criteria, the better able they will be to fully and accurately complete the Student WBL Profile, the Student Self-Assessment of Skills for Capstone WBL, the Pre-Experience Checklist, and other assignments in their capstone experience.

WBL TOOLBOX: Below you will find a suggested list materials that may be used to assess student readiness.

Student Self-Assessment of Skills for Capstone WBL: May serve as a pre-assessment of skills, providing a valuable personal snapshot of where students think they are in their development. Most importantly, it will enable them to formulate goals on that basis. *Note that the Student Self-Assessment will also be used as a “post-assessment”.*

Pre-Experience Research Checklist: Provides guidance on researching industries and workplaces of interest. It covers the various departments in an organization to encourage students to conduct online research about areas they are less familiar.

Student WBL Profile: Provides prompts for students to document prior experiences, interests, goals, and learning objectives. Establishing learning objectives is key to developing a Personalized Learning Plan for a WBL experience.

Skills Interview Guide for Students: Provides a list of the employability skills that students can learn, practice, and demonstrate in the workplace, presented as an interview guide for students. Students may use this guide to talk with employers before their experience to document what they expect to learn and the tasks and activities they will participate in to facilitate learning.

Intent to Participate Form: Signals completion of LEA requirements and the students’ intention to participate in WBL.

Informational Interview Guide: Includes the required steps, sample questions, reflection questions, a sample request letter, and sample “thank you” letter.

DURING: IMPLEMENTING WBL EXPERIENCES

The following section covers the activities that occur over the duration of the work-based learning experience. These include:

1. Linking Students to Learning-Rich Experiences
2. Orienting Students to the Workplace
3. Orienting Industry Partners
4. Developing Personalized Learning Plans and Work-Based Learning Agreements
5. Developing Safety Training Logs
6. Facilitating Learning in the Classroom
7. Monitoring Experiences: WBL Coordinators
8. Supervising Students: Workplace Mentors

1. Linking Students to Learning-Rich Experiences

Linking students to learning-rich experiences may mean matching them with new experiences and helping them design projects or school-based enterprises at school, or it may mean converting an existing job into a rich learning experience. Regardless, the Student WBL Profile created in the preparatory phase will serve as the key driver for this process.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Student WBL Profile: Provides spaces and prompts for students to document their past experiences, interests, goals, and learning objectives.

Employer Profile: Identifies the industry sectors represented at the partner organization (e.g. "Administration and Management Support Services" as well as "Health Care and Social Assistance" for a hospital) and the types of opportunities offered.

The linking process can occur in several ways. These scenarios are discussed in more detail below.

For New WBL Experiences

WBL Coordinators may draw upon the Employer Profile database, propose matches to students, and facilitate interviews. Alternatively, students can proactively seek out opportunities, possibly through follow-up outreach based on informational interviews they have done in the past. Every teacher will handle this differently based on the needs of their students. Regardless, the following should be considered:

- The student's interests are compatible with the industry
- The experience will help the student attain the WBL standards
- The workplace culture, to the extent possible, is compatible with the student's personality and/or learning style or offers an opportunity to "stretch" without either stifling or discouraging the student
- Workplace tasks are challenging without being overwhelming
- Hours and transportation requirements are suitable

The key is for students to identify opportunities that will allow them to meet the WBL standards, learn about themselves, and pursue fruitful next steps.

When the Student is Already Employed and Wants WBL Credit for Work on the Job

In many cases the student will already be employed. If the student wants to use his/her job as the WBL experience — that is, obtain WBL credit for the time at the job — the “linking” process is one of ensuring that the learning occurring at the workplace is helping students meet standards. This will involve:

- Speaking with the employer about learning opportunities or, if possible, conducting a workplace learning audit to see first-hand what opportunities may be available
- Having the student and employer complete the Personalized Learning Plan Packet, identifying the kinds of experiences that would enable the student to develop skills and meet standards
- Encouraging the employer to provide opportunities for the student to do some of the following, as appropriate:
 - shadow and interview staff about their careers and educational backgrounds
 - attend staff meetings
 - conduct research on a problem (e.g. long customer wait lines, tardiness in the workplace, need for new marketing materials, demand exceeding supply, competitors, etc.)
 - make a presentation about what they have learned
 - explore other positions in the workplace, in various departments, if possible (e.g. HR, Accounting, Facilities, Legal, Help Desk, etc.)
 - write a memo
 - complete a needed project
 - collect, photograph, and keep track of any products produced in the workplace — whether a writing sample or the perfect burger!
- Requesting that the employer complete an assessment on the student

During the course of the experience, the teacher will also conduct monitoring visits and facilitate reflection on the experience during class.

All experiences can be rich if they are approached with intentionality. For more information, see sections entitled, “*Orienting Industry Partners*” and “*Developing Personalized Learning Plans and Work-Based Learning Agreements*,” under DURING: IMPLEMENTING WBL EXPERIENCES.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Workplace Learning Audit: Sample form provided. A form to assist the WBL Coordinator in determining whether a location will provide an appropriate learning environment for a student.

Personalized Learning Plan Packet: Includes required documentation and is designed to help districts comply with state board rules and policies as well as federal and state child labor laws.

Employer Guidelines for Working with Interns: Customizable document for districts to share with employers. Provides tips for promoting learning through the workplace, addresses employer responsibilities, and provides communications expectations and contact information.

2. Orienting Students to the Workplace

Students will have done some research prior to selecting or developing WBL opportunities. They may have had previous experiences and even conducted an informational interview with a staff member at the selected worksite. They will nevertheless require orientation to the workplace. This will take place in a general way as part of the career guidance function at the school or in the WBL course, either through targeted inquiries or a speaker event. It will also take place at the worksite itself.

In the Classroom

The information to be covered in the classroom should include, but is not limited to:

- The WBL Standards
- The Personalized Learning Plan and all required paperwork
- Workplace expectations specific to the industry and/or site, including rules of conduct and the definition of “professionalism”
- Transportation issues
- Hours, attendance issues, and keeping timesheets
- Reflections and journal-keeping (if this is to be a requirement)
- Technical information specific to the industry or site (e.g. Information about the multi-media industry for or about mental illness for an internship with a homeless shelter)
- Assignments and projects expected to be completed in the classroom or at the worksite to receive course credit
- Safety issues, including sexual harassment
- Supervision
- Assessment and portfolio development

In the Workplace

In the workplace, the staff and the student’s supervisor should provide a tour and basic information:

- Welcome and introductions, including basic information about the company
- Department specifics, basic job requirements and responsibilities, and job descriptions
- Workplace tour
- Safety issues and training
- Supervisor's expectations
- Materials and equipment

WBL TOOLBOX:

Internship Orientation Checklist: A quick reference tool for employers.

3. Orienting Industry Partners

Industry partners also need to be oriented to the purposes of work-based learning and the logistics of the process.

Each opportunity, whether a speaker engagement, tour, job shadow, intensive project, school-based enterprise, internship or apprenticeship will have its own set of logistical requirements, as determined by the LEA. Across all these experiences, however, the purpose is to help students attain high-level employability skills to set them on the path to successful careers. From the employers' perspectives, students are the future workforce and citizenry that will contribute to a thriving economy and vibrant community. Employability skills are of the utmost importance to employers. For WBL experiences such as tours and job shadows, it is important to discuss these employability skills and be able to look for evidence of these skills in practice. For credit-bearing experiences, the WBL Coordinator should discuss the employability skills included in the course standards with the industry partner in the same way, showing that the student is primarily participating to develop valuable skills. The industry partners can help the students practice these skills if they know in advance which skills the students will be seeking to learn.

Each student who participates in an offsite placement will have access to a Workplace Mentor (at the company) who serves as their main point of contact and can answer questions while the student is on site. This Workplace Mentor should be in regular communication with the WBL Coordinator and helps ensure that the student has ample opportunity to practice and demonstrate the skills required by SBE High School Policy 2.103 (See section entitled "*Skills-Based Student Learning*" under *BUILDING QUALITY WORK-BASED LEARNING PROGRAMS*.)

Every LEA should develop and customize an orientation packet for industry partners that includes information about WBL requirements. Packets serve to meet the needs of employers. An "Employer WBL Packet" might include:

- A welcome letter from the principal or other school leader introducing the WBL program and expressing the value of the program to students and employers
- A WBL program brochure/description of WBL
- A checklist of the employability skills students will work on through the experience
- The Safety Training Log, and the Work-Based Learning Agreement which will be discussed further below
- Assessment tools, including a rubric for assessing student skills and an Employer Satisfaction survey to provide input to the WBL Coordinator at the end of the experience. (These are discussed in the chapter entitled "*AFTER: ASSESSING SKILLS AND EVALUATING PROGRAMS*".)

Additional useful tools may include:

- The Internship Orientation Checklist, described in the section “*Orienting Students to the Workplace*” in DURING: IMPLEMENTING WBL EXPERIENCES, may be used as a guide for employers
- Employer Guidelines for Working with Interns, which describes the basic requirements, together with suggestions for promoting learning in the workplace (These “tips” provide suggestions for offering experiences that will help the students attain the WBL standards.)
- Logistical and legal information specific to the LEA
- LEA specific timesheet for students to log hours worked, as appropriate

WBL TOOLBOX:

Introduction to WBL: General overview of what work-based learning is and how it benefits the community.

WBL 101 for Industry: An introduction to WBL for industry partners to help share the goals of work-based learning and address some of the biggest questions that industries have about working with minors.

Employability Skills Checklist: A list of the skills Tennessee industries identified as most important for WBL.

Personalized Learning Plan Packet: Includes required documentation and is designed to help districts comply with state board rules and policies as well as federal and state child labor laws.

Safety Training Log: Part of the Personalized Learning Plan Packet.

Work-Based Learning Agreement: Part of the Personalized Learning Plan Packet.

Employer Recruitment Letter: A sample letter to local employers to generate interest in WBL.

Employer WBL Packet Cover Letter: A sample letter to employers who are interested in hosting WBL capstone experiences.

Internship Orientation Checklist: A quick reference tool for employers.

Employer Guidelines for Working with Interns: Customizable document for districts to share with employers. Provides tips for promoting learning through the workplace, addresses employer responsibilities, and provides communications expectations and contact information.

Student Skills Assessment Rubric: A tool for WBL Coordinators and employers to assess the skill levels of students through workplace-based or classroom-based experiences.

Employer Satisfaction Survey: A survey for employers to provide WBL program feedback for continuous improvement.

4. Developing Personalized Learning Plans and WBL Agreements

Personalized Learning Plans are central to ensuring that students have rich learning experiences that enable them to meet the WBL standards. All students who participate in WBL experiences should have a Personalized Learning Plan to ensure that they get exposure to — and practice — the employability skills outlined in SBE High School Policy 2.103 (for more information, see the “*Quality Work-Based Learning Experiences*” section of this guide and the parallel section of the WBL Policy Guide with the same title). While all students need to be aware of and practice these skills, students who participate in WBL experiences for credit must complete the required WBL paperwork to establish a formal Personalized Learning Plan — agreed to by the teacher, the student, and the employer — that identifies the employability skills that students will develop while in the workplace. It is important for all stakeholders to be clear about the learning objectives and expectations of the work-based learning program, and be transparent about the time commitment and activities involved.

The purpose of the Personalized Learning Plan is to establish clear, shared expectations for the learning experience among the WBL Coordinator, the student, and the industry partner. According to the WBL Policy Guide, under *Implementation Policies for WBL Programs*, all Personalized Learning Plans should help students set goals for their skill development and standard attainment that help them move towards their long-term goals. By writing out specific goals and getting feedback from their employers, student WBL experiences become more intentional and results in deeper learning and meaningful reflections.

For credit-bearing experiences, the required paperwork includes the Personalized Learning Plan, the Safety Training Log, the Work-Based Learning Agreement, and the WBL Insurance and Emergency Information form. These components are included in a Personalized Learning Plan Packet specific to credit-bearing WBL experiences. This required paperwork aligns with the course standards in order to comply with high school policy, aligns with Tennessee Child Labor Law requirements to ensure compliance, and ensures that all stakeholders understand the commitment.

The **Personalized Learning Plan Packet** is required of credit-bearing WBL experiences and is provided in the WBL Toolbox. It ensures compliance with Child Labor Law in Tennessee and includes:

- 1) Part A: The student’s long-term educational and career goals and the specific tasks and activities that will help students develop the employability skills, based on the student’s goals
- 2) Part B: The employability skills required in WBL experiences, formatted for use as a planning and reflection tool to document relevant student learning experiences as they happen and plan ahead for portfolio documentation (SPED WBL coordinators may substitute the SKEMA to document skills attained by students with moderate to severe disabilities who are not on track for a regular diploma)
- 3) The Safety Training Log
- 4) The Work-Based Learning Agreement required by Tennessee Child Labor Law
- 5) A WBL Insurance and Emergency Information form

WBL TOOLBOX:

Using the Personalized Learning Plan to Guide Student Learning: A resource to help teachers understand how to use Part B of the Personalized Learning Plan Packet to set student goals, document progress towards their goals, and plan for the student's portfolio.

SKEMA: Special education resource for students enrolled in WBL Transitions course (6107) and for students pursuing the Occupational Diploma. SKEMA stands for "Skills, Knowledge, and Experience Mastery Assessment" and may be used by the WBL Coordinator or employer to document skill attainment.

Personalized Learning Plan Crosswalk for Special Education: A training tool to crosswalk the required paperwork for WBL with a student's IEP.

Including the Industry Partner in Early Conversations

The sooner the WBL coordinator connects with the employer about learning expectations for students, the better. This can happen in several ways:

- 1) On-going communication with industry partners through advisory boards or other processes, as discussed under *BEFORE: PLANNING FOR WORK-BASED LEARNING*.
- 2) During industry partner recruitment and orientations, WBL coordinators can describe the WBL Standards — in terms of skill attainment — to reinforce the purpose of WBL. Discussing employability skills can be a great door-opener for WBL experiences. For example, informing the industry partner that the student is trying to learn and demonstrate his/her initiative, teamwork, and professionalism will go a long way toward securing a quality placement.

Determining How Students Can Demonstrate Attainment of Standards

The specific requirements for student learning are determined by the WBL standards and the student's plan of study or elective focus. The way WBL standards are met will vary based on the student's objectives, the teacher's observations about the student's learning needs, and, of course, the employer's work to be completed. The teacher and the employer set the performance expectations for the student and ensure that he/she has ample opportunity to practice and demonstrate the skills. All of this is documented in the student's Personalized Learning Plan and WBL Agreement.

Ensuring that students meet all standards begins with a conversation between the student and the teacher. Together, they review the standards and discuss the ways in which the student can meet the standards through their placement. They may also discuss the student's long-term goals and learning objectives. The

Workplace Learning Audit helps the teacher and student evaluate whether the placement will provide a good learning environment, allow the student meet the course standards, and attain his/her goals.

Note: According to state board policies, all WBL experiences should address each of the four categories of employability skills, as listed in *“Skills-Based Student Learning”* under *BUILDING QUALITY WORK-BASED LEARNING PROGRAMS*. In credit-bearing experiences, the students should use the set of course standards and map how they will plan to demonstrate each of the standards in their preferred or selected placement.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Employability Skills Checklist – Using Checklist to Facilitate Student Learning: Identifies activities that may be used to help students reflect on their skills and set goals for their learning.

Once a specific placement is identified, the student develops their Personalized Learning Plan with the assistance of the WBL Coordinator and input from the industry partner and a CTE-endorsed supervising teacher where appropriate. They discuss the various artifacts and evidence that the student can include in their portfolio to demonstrate their skill attainment. This collaboration ensures that the teacher, student, and employer have a common set of expectations and are working together to provide the student with the best possible learning experience. CTE-endorsed teachers can provide specific input as needed based on their knowledge of the industry. When student placements fall within Hazardous Occupations, as described in the WBL Policy Guide chapter entitled *Roles and Responsibilities for WBL Program Management*, the endorsed teacher must sign off on select paperwork.

In summary, ensuring that students meet WBL standards through development of the Personalized Learning Plan and Learning Agreement includes the following broad steps:

- 1) Student-teacher meeting to discuss standards and how the student will meet the standards
- 2) Based on the Workplace Learning Audit and/or conversations with the employer, the WBL Coordinator suggests suitable activities or ways that an existing job can be enhanced to meet learning goals
- 3) Student develops Personalized Learning Plan with the WBL Coordinator and industry partner, with input from the CTE-endorsed teacher as needed

During the meeting, the WBL Coordinator and employer also discuss supervision and any logistics and legal requirements for safety documentation and related matters. The signing of the WBL Agreement completes this process. Safety training will also be discussed, as described in the section *“Developing Safety Training Logs”* in DURING: IMPLEMENTING WBL EXPERIENCES.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Workplace Learning Audit: Sample form provided. A form to assist the WBL Coordinator in determining whether a location will provide an appropriate learning environment for a student.

5. Developing Safety Training Logs

Safety is of paramount importance in working with minors. The Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development regulates safety in the workplace and requires safety training documentation. When students are under the age of eighteen and are placed in WBL experiences in which they are considered an employee (for example, in an internship, co-op, or apprenticeship), Tennessee Child Labor Law applies. For more information on how Child Labor Law applies to WBL and the required paperwork, refer to the WBL Policy Guide.

There are best practices for completing the Safety Training Log for students in WBL experiences. This documentation serves to protect the student from harm, but is also critically important to the school and the employer. Accurate and complete documentation can protect the school and the employer in the case of an accident. Failing to provide adequate documentation can result in serious repercussions and fines. The following best practices are important when completing Safety Training Logs:

- 1) The WBL Coordinator must consider the job responsibilities of the student and any equipment or hazardous situations that may arise in the student's particular workplace. The safety training log should mention specific topics covered that are of use to the particular student and should not list generic topics like "job-specific safety training."
- 2) The WBL Coordinator must confer with endorsed teachers regarding the Safety Training Log for any industries that may involve hazardous activities, as described in the WBL Policy Guide chapter entitled *Roles and Responsibilities for WBL Program Management*; the endorsed teacher must sign off on the Safety Training Log in these cases.
- 3) The topics covered should be immediately clear to any Department of Labor and Workforce Development representative that may check in at the worksite. For this reason, it is not a good practice to use acronyms without a description. For example: HIPAA (healthcare confidentiality). Remember, the person reviewing this paperwork may not be familiar with your industry, so clarity is paramount.

Hazardous Occupations:

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) prohibits minors under age 18 years old to work in any occupation that it deems to be particularly hazardous. Among these occupations are excavation, mining, manufacturing explosives, and operating some types of power-driven equipment, such as forklifts. Exemptions are made in Federal and State Child Labor laws to allow CTE students and apprentices to perform certain tasks in these areas when it pertains to their learning experience. The state and federal government closely monitor compliance. For more information, see <https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/youthlabor/hazardousjobs>

The Tennessee Department of Labor provides additional guidelines. See <http://www.tn.gov/workforce/article/child-labor>.

Tennessee students who participate in these occupations for WBL must have a Hazardous Occupation Form on file at the company at the school with their Personalized Learning Plan.

- 4) The name of the individual who provided the training should be clearly identified with the date the training occurred. This form may not indicate the trainer as “WBL Coordinator” or “supervisor,” but must provide the person’s name.
- 5) The Safety Training Log must be updated if the student learns to use new equipment at the site or participates in other safety training during the placement. Updated copies must be kept at the site and the school per the WBL Policy Guide.
- 6) All form fields must be complete (and include n/a if the field is not applicable to the situation). Incomplete fields may cause Department of Labor and Workforce Development representatives to consider the form invalid.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Safety Training Log: Part of the Personalized Learning Plan Packet.

Personalized Learning Plan Packet: Includes required documentation and is designed to help districts comply with state board rules and policies as well as federal and state child labor laws.

6. Facilitating Learning in the Classroom

Connecting the workplace with the classroom is critical to facilitate student learning. To obtain credit for a WBL course, students must demonstrate that they have attained the WBL course standards. While they create a plan for how they will meet the standards in their Personalized Learning Plan, students demonstrate attainment of the standards by compiling evidence. Over the period of the course, students will compile their work products, employer evaluations, original research, reflections, presentations, and more to demonstrate their skills. This is discussed further under “*Assessing Student Skills and Reviewing Portfolios*” under AFTER: ASSESSING SKILLS AND EVALUATING PROGRAMS.

In some scenarios, most of the student’s time will be spent in the workplace, and evidence will be collected during the experience, compiled by the student, and presented at the end of the experience for teacher evaluation and conferring of credit. In other cases, students will check in regularly with the teacher during class time to reflect and discuss what they are learning with their peers and their teacher. They may meet weekly or biweekly to complete research and writing assignments, work on projects, and prepare their portfolios. Local districts may determine how this time will be structured to best meet the needs of their students and teachers.

While the first approach may be more common, the latter approach is more conducive to student learning. The department recommends dedicated, in-person time for reflection on a weekly basis to deepen the learning experience. For students to fully benefit and develop employability skills that are transferrable to multiple future career options, reflection time is particularly important. In an increasingly global economy, students need portable, transferable 21st Century Learning and Innovation Skills, Career Navigation abilities, and a deep anchor of self-knowledge. Together with academic and technical skills, these will enable students to navigate future challenges and to seek out and seize new opportunities.

Classroom experiences may include reflection exercises, research and writing assignments, and hands-on projects that enable students to better understand their workplace experiences, transfer knowledge, and apply what they have learned. During this process, students also compile evidence of their learning in the form of various artifacts. These may include writing samples, resumes, video clips and PowerPoint presentations, among many options, as described below. Assessments of these artifacts serve as ongoing, formative feedback to students about the quality of their work — areas of strength and areas needing improvement and further development. Students can compile these pieces of evidence into portfolios for eventual use in summative assessments of learning, described later in this Implementation Guide.

There are many types of activities that the WBL Coordinator can facilitate or assign as necessary that will help students connect school and work, deepen learning, and result in artifacts for the student to include in their portfolio. These activities may relate to:

- 1) WBL Readiness
- 2) Work Documentation and Reflections
- 3) Practicing Workplace Skills with Feedback from Teachers and Peers
- 4) Work Products

- 5) Projects and Presentations
- 6) Writing and Research Exercises
- 7) Assessments
- 8) Career Development
- 9) Preparation of the Portfolio

Demonstrating WBL Readiness

As described in *“Demonstrating Student Readiness for Work-Based Learning”* in BEFORE: PREPARING FOR WORK-BASED LEARNING students can complete a number of exercises to learn about themselves, industries of interest, and particular workplaces. In doing so, they can demonstrate readiness to learn in workplaces or through employer-driven projects. The most important of these is the student’s self-assessment against the standards. This will lay the foundation for setting learning goals and developing a learning plan for any work-based learning experience, in consultation with the employer, if the WBL will be at a worksite.

WBL TOOLBOX: The following tools are provided to facilitate this process.

Student Self-Assessment of Skills for Capstone WBL: May serve as a pre-assessment or a post-assessment of skills, providing a valuable personal snapshot of where students think they are in their development. Most importantly, it will enable them to formulate goals and reflect on their progress.

Pre-Experience Research Checklist: Provides guidance on researching industries and workplaces of interest. It covers the various departments in an organization to encourage students to conduct online research about areas they are less familiar.

Student WBL Profile: Provides prompts for students to document prior experiences, interests, goals, and learning objectives. Establishing learning objectives is key to developing a Personalized Learning Plan for a WBL experience.

Skills Interview Guide for Students: Provides a list of the employability skills that students can learn, practice, and demonstrate in the workplace, presented as an interview guide for students. Students may use this guide to talk with employers before their experience to document what they expect to learn and the tasks and activities they will participate in to facilitate learning.

Intent to Participate Form: Signals completion of LEA requirements and the students’ intention to participate in WBL.

Informational Interview Guide: Includes the required steps, sample questions, reflection questions, a sample request letter, and sample “thank you” letter.

Work Documentation and Reflections

Documentation of progress during the experience can take three forms: Logs of hours, logs of accomplishments, and thoughtful, systematic reflections exercises.

- At the discretion of the LEA, a log of hours worked and responsibilities undertaken in work-based learning can be important to tracking progress. The time log will be provided by the WBL coordinator or the employer, as appropriate. In itself, however, such a log would not demonstrate learning.
- At the discretion of the LEA, a log of accomplishments may be provided by the teacher or WBL Coordinator. Students can complete this on an ongoing basis to track their activities and accomplishments. This log can then be included in the portfolio. The information will also be used to update the student's resume. However, as with the log of hours, a log of responsibilities does not provide evidence of learning.
- A reflection journal can demonstrate learning. Reflection is critical in allowing students to connect what they are experiencing in the workplace with their classroom learning. It enables transfer of knowledge and coordination of academic learning with the worksite experience, and helps students see the workplace as a *subject* of learning, not just a location for learning (Bailey, Hughes, & Moore, 2004).

Reflection involves both the *teaching* and *facilitation* of reflection. The development and improvement of employability skills (such as oral and written communication, critical thinking and problem-solving, collaboration and teamwork, and creativity and innovation) through work-based learning experiences requires reflection. The WBL

Coordinator/teacher helps students learn to reflect on their experiences, but also facilitates opportunities to do so. He/she helps the student reflect on the standards as learning objectives with clear performance expectations. This type of reflection is an essential employability skill that can deepen the student's learning in work-based learning experiences. The reflection is also key to the student learning how to articulate the transferrable nature of the skills they have developed.

The biggest challenge to teaching and facilitating reflection for learning is that many students, and even some teachers, have a preconceived idea about what it means to reflect. They may think reflection is simply sharing thoughts and feelings stimulated by the experience. This meaning of reflection is too limited. Teaching students to reflect for deeper learning should begin with understanding the performance expectations of the

Example of Reflection:

On the fourth week of class during a Career Practicum course, students are given the prompt to reflect on their first three weeks in the workplace, as follows: "Identify an activity that was part of your work-based learning experience in which the intended learning objective (e.g. making presentations) could be practiced and improved." The students review the standards in the area of communication, and prepare their reflection pieces by analyzing their performance in the workplace against the standards, comparing this with feedback they received on a prior class presentation, and self-assessing areas where performance could be improved. The teacher then facilitates a class discussion on strategies to improve performance in selected skill areas, so that students can share their insights and suggestions and support one another in implementing their strategies.

learning environment. With this as a starting point, students can recognize how to evaluate and model expected behavior, accurately assess their own performance, and learn to take critical feedback for improvement.

For students who are just learning how to reflect on their experience and performance, the use of prompting questions is helpful. Examples of prompts include:

- 1) Identify an intended learning objective (knowledge and/or skill) of your work-based learning experience.
- 2) Identify an activity that was part of your work-based learning experience in which the intended learning objective could be practiced and improved.
- 3) Describe something you did or produced as part of that activity which demonstrated your current level of knowledge and/or skill in relation to the learning objective.
- 4) Evaluate your own performance or product in terms of the standards and criteria given in the rubric.
- 5) If this is not the first time you have reflected on your performance or products in relation to this learning objective, identify some way that your work has improved since the last time.
- 6) Identify something new you could do to improve your performance or product even more in terms of the standards and criteria given in the rubric.

Reflection for learning is a core skill of self-assessment, self-direction, and learning to learn. In addition to providing prompting questions (more at the beginning, and fewer later), facilitating reflection for learning includes providing timely and actionable feedback to students on their reflections: on both the content of their reflection (e.g., did they accurately identify an intended learning objective and related activity, did the action or product described exemplify demonstration of the learning objective identified, did they accurately evaluate their performance or product in relation to the rubric, etc.) and their developing ability to reflect for learning.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Student Reflection Questions: Sample questions that may be used in conjunction with any WBL experience.

Practicing Workplace Skills with Feedback from Teachers and Peers

For many students, WBL is their first experience in a professional work setting. They may feel uncomfortable or unprepared. Time in the classroom, as well as feedback from teachers and peers, enable students to practice some of the skills in a safe and supportive environment. Skills that students may need or want to practice in the classroom so they are prepared at work may include:

- How to run a meeting
- How to take notes in a meeting
- Putting together a PPT presentation
- Delivering a presentation to a group of co-workers

- Providing feedback to a co-worker
- Using certain features on a computer
- Writing a memo
- Doing workplace math
- Dealing with a customer service problem

Teachers can structure their lessons, particularly early in the semester, to create time each class period for students to practice key skills. This can be driven by the students' reflections on what they are learning at work and where they feel they need support or improvement. Most likely, several students will identify similar skills they would like to work on. Practice in a group setting enables students to learn from one another and the teacher, as well as individually from the employer.

Work Products

Work products can vary, depending on the industry, the types of opportunities, and whether the students are in school settings or at a worksite. Some work products may be developed in the classroom based on a need identified in the workplace. For work samples to be most valuable for learning, they must be linked to standards and learning plans and reflected upon.

Examples of work products include:

- Brochure or web page designed as part of a project
- Research papers
- Posters produced for a team project presentation
- Video or audio recordings of presentations
- Surveys designed and results of the survey
- Appointment schedules and lesson plans developed for a tutoring program
- Budgets created and managed using a spreadsheet program
- Article written and submitted for publication
- Drawings or pictures of models built

For each work sample, students may be asked to write a reflection of learning (see Student Reflection Form for content and format) that describes the work sample and identifies the knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Writing/Research Exercises

Writing exercises are also intended to be research exercises. They demonstrate in-depth knowledge about a career area, describing skill needs and future trends in the industry; use of multiple sources (interviews, literature review and internet search) with proper citations, will demonstrate research/learning how to learn, information literacy, and written communication skills.

Students may use a variety of sources, including the internet, print media, and interviews. Interviews with employers — before, during, or after WBL experience — also provide students a unique opportunity to use a “primary source” to learn about the economy, their areas of career interest, and the skills they should develop to succeed. This can be done using the Informational Interview Guide provided in the WBL Toolbox.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Informational Interview Guide: Includes the required steps, sample questions, reflection questions, a sample request letter, and sample “thank you” letter.

Projects and Presentations

Projects enable students to conduct research, produce writing and other work products and demonstrate many 21st Century Learning and Innovation standards as part of one coherent “package”. Projects may be done at the workplace, if the Workplace Mentor identifies a suitable project, or in the classroom. The LEA may decide to substitute projects for separate Writing and Work Products, taking a “project-based learning” approach to the class. Projects are particularly useful in teaching project management skills, which include analysis of requirements, development of work plans, budgeting of resources, and time management. They offer the opportunity to showcase the “productivity and accountability” standard, as well as collaboration, the ability to work with diversity, adaptability and flexibility, and other standards.

Teachers may also require that projects result in culminating presentations. Presentations enable students to develop a variety of communication skills, both written and oral.

See materials on project-based learning available from the Buck Institute for Education: www.bie.org.

See also the Project Management Institute Educational Foundation for teaching materials related to project management and the development of employability skills at <http://pmief.org/learning-resources/resources-for-youth/teachers>.

Project presentation rubrics are readily available at these and other sites.

Assessments

While assessment is generally thought of as a culminating experience, ongoing assessments can be great opportunities to help the student learn to take critical feedback and adjust behavior. Two kinds of assessment can be used to foster learning: self-assessment and reflections on employer or teacher assessments of the student.

- **Self-assessment** is a good learning opportunity. It not only focuses students on the content being assessed but on the process of self-evaluation, which is in itself, a critical employability skill.

- **Debrief of assessment by employer.** In addition, students will be evaluated by teachers and employers, based on a rubric. Having the students take time to understand and integrate the teachers' and employers' perceptions of their performance is a rich learning experience.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Student Self-Assessment of Skills for Capstone WBL: May serve as a pre-assessment or a post-assessment of skills, providing a valuable personal snapshot of where students think they are in their development. Most importantly, it will enable them to formulate goals and reflect on their progress.

Student Skills Assessment Rubric: A feedback tool for WBL Coordinators and employers to assess the skill levels of students through workplace-based or classroom-based experiences.

Updating Career Development Materials

Updating materials that will go into the portfolio can bring closure to the learning experience. Included in the suggested list are the student Plan, to be updated in conjunction with the counseling office, as well as applications for both college and work. Completing a personal essay is an important exercise that can be used for many purposes beyond the college application. Completing an application also signals to the student that they have choices and that teachers have high expectations for them — irrespective of their final decisions. Below is a list of possible documents that can be completed in the WBL class in support of students' future steps.

- Updating of career and educational development plans
- Resume development is a good exercise because it requires students to think about their accomplishments and interests. Resumes should be updated yearly, if not more frequently.
- For seniors: development of an application for college, including a personal essay that may draw on the students' work-based learning experiences
- Application for employment
- Drafts of letters of recommendation that students would want an esteemed reference to write for them, based on the students' accomplishments

Preparation of the Portfolio

Portfolio preparation is the culminating experience in most WBL classes for credit-bearing experiences. This step deserves attention and dedicated time. It involves the students' careful selection of the Work Products, Writing Samples, and/or Projects and other materials that will best provide evidence of standards attainment.

Students may develop an introductory letter, explaining why the samples were included, and a table of contents for the portfolio. Preparation of the student portfolio is discussed further under “Assessing Student Skills and Reviewing Portfolios”, under *AFTER: ASSESSING SKILLS AND EVALUATING PROGRAMS*.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Portfolio Components-Suggested: A list of suggested components that may be included in a WBL portfolio.

7. Monitoring Experiences: WBL Coordinators

Close communication between the WBL coordinator and the employer ensure that learning is truly tied to the standards and supports the students' learning objectives. While only one monitoring visit is required per grading period, it is strongly recommended that WBL coordinators, and endorsed teachers, where appropriate, conduct additional visits to ensure safe and quality learning experiences for students. Local policies may go beyond Tennessee requirements for monitoring.

Monitoring ensures safe, quality learning experiences that comply with Child Labor Laws and WBL policies.

Some key monitoring guidelines include the following:

- The timing of monitoring visits and other check-ins by phone or email depends on the length of the work-based learning experience (semester, trimester or year-long) and the number of credits to be conferred. *(See pull-out box.)*
 - Conduct a monitoring site visit as least once every grading period. The following schedule is suggested:
 - one early visit with the student at the site
 - one early conversation with the employer (this could be a phone call if the supervisor isn't available when the student visit is made)
 - one on-site visit with the student's workplace mentor or whoever is evaluating the student's performance
 - If possible, make some contact every 7-10 days
 - Make scheduled and unscheduled visits
- Teachers conducting monitoring visits:
 - Endorsed teachers must participate in monitoring visits whenever students are working in industries or occupations deemed "hazardous", as described in the WBL Policy Guide chapter entitled *Roles and Responsibilities for WBL Program Management*.
 - Regardless of the hazard status of any experience, WBL Coordinators are encouraged to engage endorsed teachers in monitoring visits, as the endorsed teachers may have more in-depth knowledge of the industry or occupation that can inform discussions with the employer. It is highly recommended that the LEA require the endorsed teacher to make at least one visit per term.
- Document every contact with the work site, keeping copies of all emails with work site mentor, students and parent

Timing of Monitoring Visits

*Tennessee school districts operate on varying schedules — semesters, trimesters, and year-long schedules. As such, it is suggested that the appropriate number of monitoring visits be defined by the terms in which credit is conferred. It has been recommended that, **per credit earned, 2-3 visits** be required by local districts.*

In this case, if a whole credit is earned in one semester, 2 visits may be most appropriate during that semester. However, for a year-long course that only confers 1 credit, these visits would be much more spread out. In this case, the district should consider requiring more regular check-ins to ensure safe and quality learning experiences for students.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Monitoring Visit Checklist: A checklist to help teachers conduct effective monitoring visits.

8. Supervising Students: Workplace Mentors

Supervision in the workplace ensures student safety and compliance with all workplace practices and requirements. For students who employed by businesses to earn WBL credit, Workplace Mentors must be assigned to serve as their supervisors. Supervisors should be available to students when they have questions and ensure that students can meet the WBL course standards by providing adequate learning environments.

The Workplace Mentor should involve the student in activities that will help him/her meet the WBL course standards. To the extent possible and appropriate, students will have the opportunity to speak with the supervisor regularly, participate in staff meetings and other workplace functions, speak with and/or shadow staff in other departments of the organization, and carry out projects as appropriate. Rose (2007) writes, “The best of the real-world environments are modified, however, by the presence of supervision and some explicitly pedagogical interaction. So expert professionals determine what tasks the students do, in what order, provide guidance, and pose questions...” In this way, the student’s supervisor plays a role in the student’s work experience and in providing a quality learning experience. While many companies have their own guidelines or provide very structured internship programs, other employers may desire more information about how to help the students. The following tool is a resource that can be shared with them if they request this information.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Employer Guidelines for Working with Interns: Customizable document for districts to share with employers. Provides tips for promoting learning through the workplace, addresses employer responsibilities, and provides communications expectations and contact information.

Teachers can identify many of these opportunities in advance during the “Workplace Learning Audit”; many of these will have been included in the student’s Learning Plan and Learning Agreement. Teacher monitoring visits offer an opportunity for teachers to support the employers in identifying these possible learning experiences in their workplaces.

Suggestions for fostering the attainment of standards include the following:

- **Connecting school and work.** Encourage students to relate their internship experiences back to their class work by initiating conversation and asking them the following kinds of questions:
 - What kinds of reading, writing and math do you do at school and at work—and how are they similar or different?
 - What skills do you need at work that you can also work on at school?
 - What kinds of things are you good at, or do you like, that you can explore further in school?
 - What could you learn in college that would enable you to pursue a well-paying career in our organization or another organization like ours?

- **Application of math skills.** Encourage students to use math, whether in measurement, counting change, or completing accounting ledgers.
- **Application of reading and writing skills.** Encourage students to read manuals and write memos; do not hesitate to require students to complete work to the expected standards.
- **Learning about careers.** Provide opportunities for the student to be exposed to various departments and functions, including technical departments, marketing, human resources, finance/accounting, etc. by encouraging them to visit, conduct interviews, and/or shadow staff throughout the organization.
- **Learning about the workplace, understanding teamwork, and building relationships.** Provide opportunities for students to participate in staff meetings, project meetings, and other formal and informal exchanges among staff; introduce students to staff and encourage staff to welcome students to join them at lunch and breaks. Informal exchanges are often the best way to learn about an organization's culture.
- **Initiative, critical thinking, and creativity.** If possible, allow students to solve problems on their own, tackle small organizational issues, or take on tasks requiring novel solutions, in addition to carrying out everyday responsibilities; these will help students develop and demonstrate initiative, critical thinking, problem-solving and creativity — skills that they will need in future careers that are difficult to learn in school.
- **Productivity, accountability, and collaboration.** If possible, provide a project to the student — one that would enable the student to plan his/her time, organize tasks, and work with others, in addition to performing basic workplace tasks.
- **Communication.** If possible, ask the student to present the project to his/her teammates and supervisor, to practice oral communication and presentation skills.
- **Providing feedback to teachers as well as students.** Provide input to the teacher or Work-based Learning Coordinator during supervisory visits to the worksite; provide specific suggestions regarding students' knowledge and skills that could benefit both the intern and other students.

AFTER: ASSESSING SKILLS AND EVALUATING PROGRAMS

For WBL experiences and programs to make a real and lasting impact on students, the learning experience must be robust and the program must be run well. This section discusses assessment and follow-up that helps WBL Coordinators, school districts, and industry partners build lasting relationships and quality programs. For sustainable programs to develop, student assessments should indicate that students are learning the skills they need to be successful. Program evaluations should provide feedback from students, employers and school personnel to provide feedback on the processes and logistics that can make the program successful. Finally, districts are required to adopt a process for evaluation and assessment to ensure WBL experiences are of high quality for the student. This section provides tools your district may choose to use to meet this requirement. They include assessments that promote and document student learning and evaluations of experiences by employers to provide feedback to WBL Coordinators and schools about the efficacy of the experiences.

This section addresses:

- 1) Assessing Student Skills and Reviewing Portfolios
- 2) Evaluating WBL Program Quality
- 3) Promoting Continuous Improvement

1. Assessing Student Skills and Reviewing Portfolios

This section describes assessments that are completed by the students themselves and by supervisors and/or WBL Coordinators. It also discusses the use of portfolios as a form of summative assessment. The portfolio is used to document attainment of WBL course standards and learning objectives set in the student's Personalized Learning Plan and is scored with a holistic rubric.

Student Self-Assessment

The Student Self-Assessment is a critical learning tool for students, in requiring students to think about the opportunities and the degree to which they have attained the standards. This self-evaluation process is useful as a key learning skill in itself, as described in the section on reflection. The self-assessment can be administered at the beginning and at the end of the course. Comparisons with the employer evaluation can also yield important insights.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Student Self-Assessment of Skills for Capstone WBL: May serve as a pre-assessment or a post-assessment of skills, providing a valuable personal snapshot of where students think they are in their development. Most importantly, it will enable them to formulate goals and reflect on their progress.

The Employer Assessment of the Student

At the end of the experience the employer will also be asked to assess the student. The assessment allows the supervisor to provide valuable feedback on the student's performance. This enables the student to learn from the WBL experience and better understand professional expectations.

A rubric is provided to support the employer in this evaluation. All of the standards are described along a four-point continuum. Employers are asked to be candid in assessing students, to provide meaningful feedback.

The WBL coordinator will work with the employer to determine the assessment logistics. As recommended under *"Orienting Industry Partners"* in DURING: IMPLEMENTING WBL EXPERIENCES, the assessment should be introduced to the employer during the development of the student's Personalized Learning Plan. This way the assessment can guide the learning process and the Partner is also notified in advance that they will be asked to complete the assessment.

WBL TOOLBOX:

Student Skills Assessment Rubric: A feedback tool for WBL Coordinators and employers to assess the skill levels of students through workplace-based or classroom-based experiences.

WBL Coordinator Evaluations and Observations

At the discretion of the LEA, the WBL Coordinator may also use the Student Skills Assessment Rubric together with other processes to evaluate and recognize student performance.

WBL TOOLBOX:

SKEMA: Special education resource for students enrolled in WBL Transitions course (6107) and for students pursuing the Occupational Diploma. SKEMA stands for “Skills, Knowledge, and Experience Mastery Assessment” and may be used by the WBL Coordinator or employer to document student skill attainment.

The WBL Portfolio

Prior sections of this WBL Implementation Guide discussed the activities and projects that could facilitate learning, and how the artifacts students produce and other work samples can be used as a formative learning tool. In this section, the portfolio is discussed as a summative assessment tool. Throughout their WBL experience, students will develop work products, collect employer evaluations, produce original research, write reflections, and give presentations. The portfolio will be used as a selection of artifacts that best document attainment of WBL course standards. Where appropriate an endorsed CTE teacher may assist the WBL Coordinator in assessing a student’s portfolio when the work samples require industry specific knowledge to assess technical skill attainment.

Specific parameters for WBL portfolios may be determined by the LEA as long as course standards are achieved when applicable. Below are some suggested portfolio artifacts.

WBL TOOLBOX: Additional documentation is provided where noted below.

Portfolio Components-Suggested: A list of suggested components that may be included in a WBL portfolio.

Portfolio Rubric: Sample checklist for assessing student portfolios and a matrix for tracking various artifacts.

1) Career Development Materials

- a) Career and educational development plan
- b) Resume
- c) Application for college
- d) Application for employment
- e) Letters of recommendation

2) Documentation of Progress

- a) List of responsibilities or accomplishments achieved throughout the experiences

- b) Periodic journal entries reflecting on tasks and activities (sample **Student Reflection Questions** provided in WBL Toolbox)
- 3) Work Samples (3-4 may be included)** of materials developed throughout the experience linked to standards and Personalized Learning Plan
- 4) Writing/Research Sample** to demonstrate in-depth knowledge about a career area, describing skill needs and future trends in the industry; use of multiple sources (interviews, literature review and internet search) with proper citations, to demonstrate research/learning how to learn, information literacy, and written communication skills
- 5) Project** encompassing both work samples and writing samples, and culminating in a presentation. (This may substitute for Writing/Research Sample and other Work Samples, if the project will already include these components.)
- 6) Assessments**
- **Student Self-Assessment of Skills for Capstone WBL** (provided in WBL Toolbox)
 - Supervisor evaluation and observations (**Student Skills Assessment Rubric** provided in WBL Toolbox)
 - WBL coordinator evaluations and observations as appropriate

The portfolio also may be preceded by:

- **An Introductory letter** written by the student describing the work to be presented and how the samples were selected
- **Table of Contents**

Scoring the portfolio. If the Portfolio is to serve as an assessment instead of simply a compilation of materials, it must also be scored. The intention is that the overall portfolio would provide strong evidence, holistically, that the student has attained the standards. A portfolio rubric has been developed to score the portfolio against the Tennessee WBL Standards. Each of the groups of standards is listed along the vertical axis. A crosswalk is provided to the various components of the portfolio.

The rubric can be customized to meet the portfolio requirements of the district, but the Portfolio must at least address course standards for credit-bearing experiences.

2. Evaluating WBL Program Quality

In addition to assessing student performance, LEAs must evaluate experience and programs to ensure high quality experiences for students and build capacity to serve more students. Program evaluation to ensure quality is required in the Tennessee Department of Education WBL Policy Guide. Building high quality programs and greater capacity not only allows more students to benefit from these capstone level-experiences, but it is also a priority for businesses and supports the economic prosperity of communities.

Industry partners will also be asked to provide feedback on the experience itself, focused on how well they were prepared, and how smoothly the implementation went. The experience is rated on a four-point scale and employers are urged to provide any feedback that could improve the program.

For WBL to take hold and expand to serve more students in meeting the WBL Standards, the LEA itself may seek information to promote ongoing program and systemic improvement. Using a five-part rubric, the LEA and stakeholder can rate the program and systemic change that would support the improvement and sustainability of high quality WBL long term. The “LEA Satisfaction Survey” asks about teacher beliefs related to WBL, teacher and student roles in the classroom, teaching principles, the professional community, leadership, policy, and professional development, among other topics. The aim of the survey is to promote the deep embedding of WBL as an instructional strategy that can support the attainment of standards for students throughout the school district, while also supporting workforce development and benefiting communities.

WBL TOOLBOX: Additional documentation is provided where noted below.

Employer Satisfaction Survey: A survey for employers to provide WBL program feedback for continuous improvement.

LEA Satisfaction Survey: A survey for school and district employees to provide WBL program feedback for continuous improvement.

3. Promoting Continuous Improvement

The goal of the Tennessee Department of Education WBL Standards, Policy Guide, and Implementation Guide is to facilitate high quality work-based learning that benefits students, employers and communities. Beyond strengthening individual programs, the Department of Education encourages processes that will promote “continuous improvement” over time. A continuous improvement process would include educators, industry, and community representatives. All stakeholders engage over time to deepen quality, ensure sustainability, promote spread or expansion, promote buy-in and ownership by all stakeholders, and adapt as necessary to changing need.

A tool has been provided to support this kind of continuous improvement process. It is based on years of research in system improvement in the private sector, but has been adapted to address the development of WBL systems in Tennessee.

WBL TOOLBOX: Additional documentation is provided where noted below.

WBL SAMPLE Program Evaluation Framework 1: Sample framework for districts to assess their own WBL programs and identify opportunities for continuous improvement (one-page version).

WBL SAMPLE Program Evaluation Framework 2: Sample framework for districts to assess their own WBL programs and identify opportunities for continuous improvement (multiple-page version).



[WBL TOOLBOX](#): Supplemental materials available in the online WBL Toolbox