

# Nebraska Work-Based Learning Landscape Analysis

June 2021

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## Executive Summary

What if every student in Nebraska had access to real-world, hands-on learning experiences that brought classroom content to life on job sites across the state? Which strategies used in other states might help Nebraska make strides towards this possibility?

Over the last six months, TNTP has partnered with the Nebraska Department of Education's Office of Career and Technical Education to explore those questions. Using both quantitative and qualitative techniques, we sought to better understand the current approach to work-based learning (WBL)—identifying strengths, barriers, and existing resources—and highlight concrete steps to give more students access to high-quality (WBL).

Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) began rethinking Career and Technical Education (CTE) in the state in the early 2000s, developing the [Nebraska Career Education Model](#) to provide a framework for career awareness and for structuring CTE courses and programs. The model defines six major career fields: agriculture, food, and natural resources; business, marketing, and management; communication and information systems; health sciences; human sciences and education; and skilled and technical sciences. These career fields are further broken down by career clusters, which map out the courses a student needs in order to pursue a career. Within each career cluster are programs of study: a specific series of courses designed to prepare students for postsecondary education and career opportunities.

Our analysis highlights Nebraska's strengths alongside potential best practices that could inform Nebraska's approach to WBL opportunities. **In many ways, the Nebraska Career Education Model positions the state as a national leader in WBL. Stakeholders from around the state offered a vision to build on this successful foundation in order to enhance WBL for all Nebraska students.** Specifically, we recommend that NDE leaders focus on five key strategies moving forward:

1. Build on current strengths in the state's college and career readiness standards and definition of WBL and **focus on meeting stakeholder implementation needs with increased communications, messaging, and branding of WBL opportunities.** Stakeholders are not always aware of existing resources to support implementation, and potential employers may not fully understand the purpose and benefits of WBL.
2. **To expand both student awareness and ease of tracking participation, add a "with WBL" descriptor to courses,** within CTE and beyond. Districts and schools will require support and resources to understand this new designation and how to advise students on enrolling in appropriate courses.
3. **To provide more equitable access to WBL opportunities, explore the feasibility of creating Regional WBL Coordinator positions serving all communities in the state.** While sustainable funding is an important consideration, evidence suggests that WBL coordinators are gatekeepers to opportunity, and capacity dedicated to coordination can expand access.
4. **Consider other public agency partnerships (for example, with state Workforce Development and Economic Development agencies, as well as the Community College System)** to support access, funding, implementation, and identification of new employer partners.
5. **Expand data reporting strategies** to increase access to reports and dashboards that are publicly available, transparent, and focused on identifying and addressing equity gaps in participation of all students in all parts of the state in high-quality, classroom-connected WBL opportunities.

## Introduction and Context

Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) began rethinking Career and Technical Education (CTE) in the state in the early 2000s, developing the Nebraska Career Education Model to provide a framework for career awareness and for structuring CTE courses and programs. This change was in line with requirements of the federal Perkins Act. The Career Education Model defines six major career fields: agriculture, food, and natural resources; business, marketing, and management; communication and information systems; health sciences; human sciences and education; and skilled and technical sciences. These career fields are further broken down by career clusters, which map out the courses a student needs in order to pursue a career. Within each career cluster are programs of study: a specific series of courses designed to prepare students for postsecondary education and career opportunities. Students who complete at least three courses in a CTE program of study are referred to as “CTE concentrators.”

Under the most current version of the Perkins Act (The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, e.g., [Perkins V](#)), states are required to report annually on core indicators of performance. Nebraska has selected participation in Work-Based Learning (WBL) as one indicator of CTE program quality.<sup>1</sup> States are also required to report disaggregated data on the performance of students by race, ethnicity, gender, and special population categories.

Authentic efforts to transform WBL in Nebraska are fundamental to its long-term sustainability and the quality of opportunities WBL offers to Nebraska students. By building on the assets that already exist in Nebraska, the state is well positioned to continue to refine a vision for WBL that is aligned to the state’s labor market needs and trends.

The need for understanding the unique context and experiences of Nebraska’s educators and students to create substantial and sustainable change in WBL led to a partnership with TNTP to conduct a landscape analysis to inform the alignment of WBL to strategic priority 5 of Nebraska’s Perkins V plan.<sup>2</sup> Further, understanding how educators and students currently experience WBL - and the barriers standing in the way - can be used to better support stakeholders and to invest employers and potential funders as the state plans for the future.

TNTP has spent the last six months using quantitative and qualitative strategies to understand the WBL context of the state, as well as compare what we learned in Nebraska to strategies pursued in other states, both in the Midwest and beyond. We collected and analyzed data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Nebraska Department of Education, students, teachers, schools, ESUs, leaders, and community members to shape our approach and inform our findings and recommendations. In all, we received survey feedback from 127 educators in 48 districts and 240 students in 14 districts. We held a series of focus groups where nearly 20 educators in a variety of roles shared feedback and perspective. Finally, we analyzed the WBL approach in 13 states around the country, comparing and contrasting their strategies with those currently employed by Nebraska. A complete methodology can be found in the appendices.

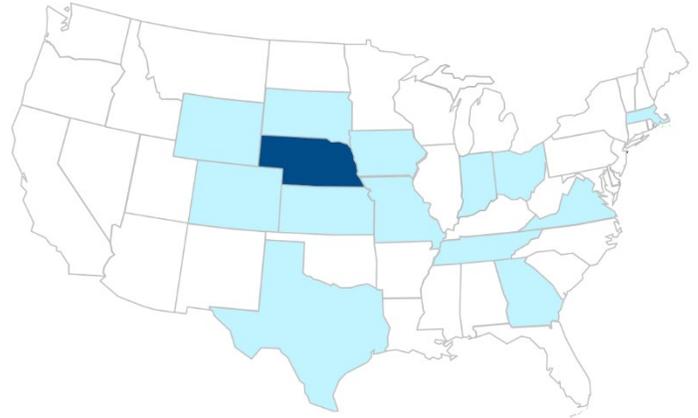
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<sup>1</sup> Perkins V [Indicator 5S3 \(Program Quality-Participated in Work-Based Learning\)](#) requires the state to report the percentage of CTE concentrators graduating from high school having participated in work-based learning.

<sup>2</sup> Nebraska has selected WBL as a program quality indicator.

## Comparative State Analysis

TNTP’s comparative analysis included 13 states, selected based on regional priority, their similarity to Nebraska, or their identification in national reports or publications as states noted because of their adoption of best practices for high-quality WBL. Specifically, we completed a review of WBL in Colorado, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Missouri, Ohio, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and Wyoming.



The comparative analysis explored state approaches to defining WBL and connecting these experiences to standards, including guidance on implementing WBL statewide. Links to state-specific resources and websites are included in Appendix III.

## Defining Work-Based Learning

Each state studied has defined WBL slightly differently, emphasizing different aspects of the learning strategy that is WBL important to specific local-context.

### Nebraska Definition of Work-based Learning

Work-Based Learning (WBL) strategies are a planned program of school-site and worksite experiences **related to the career interest of the student learner** that are designed to enable the student learner to acquire knowledge and skills in a real work setting. The **benefits for the student learner, school district, and employer** are evident as the student learner **develops technical, academic, and career readiness skills while participating in meaningful engagement with employers in his/her area**.

Nebraska’s definition is similar to other states and has strength in its inclusion of the following:

- **Student-centered** – “related to the career interest of the student learner”
- **Defined Stakeholders** – “benefits for the student learner, school, district, and employer”
- **The “Why”** – “develops technical, academic, and career readiness skills while participating in meaningful engagement with employers.

When describing their own WBL experiences, Nebraska educators have internalized the state’s definition, and most commonly defined their own WBL offerings in reference to real-world, hands-on opportunities.

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*“I think the keyword that comes to mind for us when we think about work-based learning is immersive, that it's experiential and immersive. That it's actually getting tangible, meaningful, visible connections with kids, getting boots on the ground experiences with our regional employers.” –Focus Group Participant (ESU Administrator)*

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While Nebraska’s definition of WBL is similar to the definitions adopted in comparison states, there are particular elements of other state’s definitions that could potentially be considered for inclusion if Nebraska’s definition is ever updated.<sup>3</sup>

State	WBL Definition Strengths
Texas	defines as “intentional” activities to “expand the boundaries of the classroom”; states the continuum from PK to post-secondary
Virginia	rooted in “high-quality” work-based learning
Virginia & Wyoming	“application of school-based learning and “integration of instruction”
Wyoming	explicit mention of employability
Georgia	includes the continuum aspect of WBL in its definition
Indiana	additionally mentions “solutions” in addition to programs, pathways, strategies, etc.
Tennessee	describes WBL as “collaborative” activity between stakeholders; moves beyond career interest and explicitly states “personal and professional goals”
South Dakota & Ohio	describe WBL as a “bridge” or “link” between academic, technical, and employability skills

For example, Nebraska could consider more explicit links between classroom instruction and WBL in its definition. Texas includes strong language linking classroom learning and WBL, explicitly stating that WBL is an “intentional” experience designed to “expand the boundaries of the classroom.” Virginia and Wyoming make similar connections, defining WBL as “application of school-based learning” and “integration of instruction.” Further, South Dakota and Wyoming describe WBL as a “bridge” or “link” between academic, technical, and employability skills.

While this language is not explicitly included in Nebraska’s WBL definition, educators referenced the link between classroom and work when describing WBL.

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*“I’d say it’s the experiential piece that is probably most beneficial. It’s applying the content they’re getting in the classroom to a real-world scenario.” –Focus Group Participant (CTE Coordinator)*

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<sup>3</sup> For a full list of work-based definitions from comparative states, see Appendix.

## Work-Based Learning Through Competencies, Skills, and Standards

Standards for WBL are substantively different from core content courses or even CTE courses with good reason. WBL is often, quite literally, the bridge from the academic space to industry, and so it stands to reason that the typical approach for academic learning and the typical approach for industry training don't neatly address the in-between space. As a result, states across the country have codified what students should know and be able to do in WBL differently. In most states, like Nebraska, CTE standards and programs of study are aligned with Academic Standards and/or Career Readiness Standards.

### Classifying State Approaches to WBL "Standards"

Broadly speaking, our research found that WBL expectations are codified in one of four ways: competency-based, checklists, capstone experiences, or with standards embedded elsewhere. Nebraska's model is strong and one that could serve as an exemplar elsewhere.

With respect to standards for WBL, exemplar states (1)

Personalize the Work-Based Learning standards to match

student needs, goals and interests (i.e. Colorado, Tennessee), (2) Address and assess industry-specific academic standards within CTE courses up to, and including, capstone or practicum offerings to ensure the industry-specific standards are central to the WBL experience (i.e. Tennessee), and (3) Explicitly connect core academic skills with career-readiness competencies (i.e. Iowa, Massachusetts).

In Nebraska, for example, communication of how the Career Readiness Standards and align with the concurrent work across the state is clear and consistent. There is a familiarity with these standards; in fact, one practitioner named them as *the* primary outcomes of WBL in one of our focus groups.

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*"I think if you look at our college and career-ready standards, those are the ultimate skills that we're trying to teach students. It's not just content standards for courses, but time management, communication, technology, putting it all together." –Focus Group Participant (CTE Teacher)*

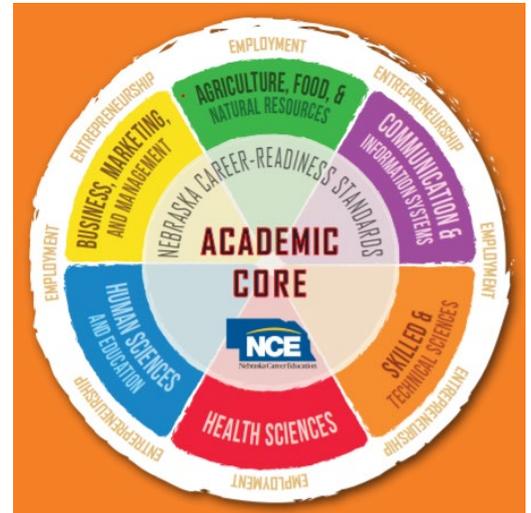
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There are various tools available to campus-based or regional ESUs to communicate out to varying degrees of detail how and when these standards are practiced. However, across focus groups, educators reported recreating custom versions of resources the state has already created and shared publicly, raising questions about how well advertised existing resources are, particularly as educators can frequently change their roles and responsibilities for WBL based on local capacity.



The state of Nebraska also recognizes that these are competencies that can and should be practiced regularly across all courses – not just CTE courses – and across all grade levels. In fact, the standards themselves are crosswalked across Nebraska’s core content standards in detail on NDE’s website.<sup>4</sup> Nebraska has thoughtfully positioned the Career Readiness standards between the Academic Core and the CTE Career Clusters. This helps to visually crystalize for stakeholders that there is no dichotomy between the core academic offerings and the career clusters.

In fact, when asked, participants in the various industry-based focus groups agreed that these were generally the right competencies<sup>5</sup> that they were looking for in their entry-level staff or in students they bring to their industry for a WBL opportunity.

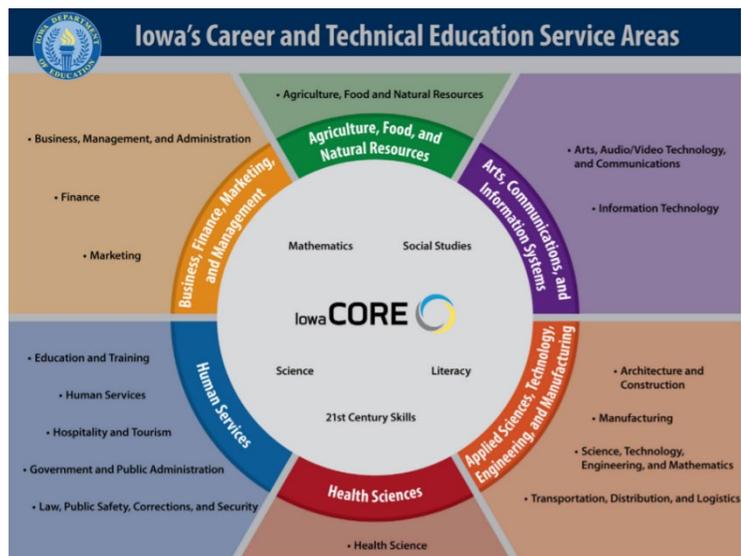


The strength of Nebraska’s model is that it considers the Career Readiness Standards as a part of academic core and connected to CTE courses, not as a separate set of standards to be addressed. This offers students early and frequent practice with employer expectations. Also, Nebraska shares learning progressions, or career readiness indicators, for both [early high school](#) (grades 9-10) and [late high school](#) (grades 11-12).

**Competency-based approach**

A majority of states researched adopted Career Readiness competencies as the way to evaluate the learnings and skills students acquire in WBL. For example, Virginia’s WBL standards are categorized by the 5Cs: Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Communication, Creative Thinking and Citizenship. The state expects students to practice these skills throughout their time on-campus in coursework and at the work-place. In fact, the state shares examples of “Across the Board” tasks for middle and high school students to potentially complete during CTE courses.

The competency-based model of standards in Iowa is similar in that it, too, shows the value of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills alongside the core academic content. Iowa defines 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills in the following categories: Civic Literacy, Employability Skills, Financial Literacy, Health Literacy and Technology Literacy. Interestingly, Civic and Financial Literacy is built into, and on the website links directly to, the state’s Social Studies standards. Employability Skills for high school students are a set of 5 standards<sup>6</sup> that are relevant to any workplace and any classroom.



<sup>4</sup> <https://www.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/NCRStandardsAlignmentBookletWEB.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Discussed during “Futuring Panels” conducted in Spring 2021

<sup>6</sup> <https://iowacore.gov/standards/21st-century-skills/9-10-11-12/high-school-employability-skills>

### Checklist approach

A few states largely assess the knowledge and skills students acquire from WBL during their secondary academic career with a checklist. The criteria, or standards, to help determine the quality of the WBL are sometimes written as expected outcomes of the educators<sup>7</sup>, or WBL coordinators, not specifically as outcomes for the student. Some of these states also ask stakeholders to determine which of the standards will be addressed in a WBL opportunity where the standards – often a mix of competency-based and industry-specific – serve as a menu of options instead of a recipe for a successful outcome for students. Industry, in this instance, serves as the north star for the WBL experience. As a result, the strength in connection between the industry expectation and the academic experience of the student can vary greatly. WBL opportunities may be more readily available within these states because there is a larger degree of flexibility for the host employer.

### Essential Skills Needed for the Workforce of Educational Opportunities Beyond High School

Entrepreneurial	Personal	Civic/Interpersonal	Professional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical thinking and problem solving</li> <li>• Creativity and innovation</li> <li>• Inquiry and analysis</li> <li>• Risk taking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiative and self-direction</li> <li>• Personal responsibility and self-management</li> <li>• Adaptability and flexibility</li> <li>• Personal awareness</li> <li>• Learn independently</li> <li>• Perseverance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core academic foundation</li> <li>• Collaboration and teamwork</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Global and cultural awareness</li> <li>• Ethics and integrity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time management</li> <li>• Career literacy</li> <li>• Grit and resilience</li> <li>• Work ethic; dependable and reliable</li> <li>• Self-advocacy</li> </ul>

In terms of outcomes for the student, the states that codify standards with checklists of this sort might have a time-on-task expectation or a portfolio requirement of students to earn credit, but what the students will learn and be able to do at the end of the WBL experience varies greatly. Given those variabilities, a number of states expect students, often in conjunction with their site supervisor or a WBL coordinator, to determine which industry-specific skills they will practice and master and these skills, or standards, are included in the student’s personalized learning plan. In Colorado, for example, students must complete an Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) as a graduation requirement per 2009 legislation. It serves as a tool where a student’s Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) is achieved.

It starts in at least 9<sup>th</sup> grade (though in some places it starts as early as 6<sup>th</sup> grade), and it builds and transfers until the student graduates from high school. It is designed to be owned by the student and supported by the adults in the student’s life and houses. Other aspects include written postsecondary/workforce goals, benchmarks and data demonstrating progress, experiences in service learning and/or work, and activities that connect academics with work. (See Appendix for additional examples.)

This flexibility in design allows the students, work-site supervisors and the campus-based coordinators to ensure that the experience is aligned, rigorous and relevant for the student’s career cluster or program of study.

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<sup>7</sup> See Georgia’s [Standards for Work-Based Learning](#)

In Ohio, the student, parent, educator and worksite supervisor are directed to the state’s academic, CTE and [OhioMeansJobs Readiness Seal competencies](#) to select the learning outcomes for the student’s Learning Agreement. The student is expected to drive and own the process of designing his or her learning agreement. Again, this allows for tremendous flexibility and choice by the various stakeholders, provided there is agreement and clear direction-setting on the part of the student. Students with less clarity on their intended career path or less familiarity with work environments might be at a disadvantage in the quality or learning outcomes. Similarly, students who may not know how to advocate for jobs that develop their skills might also be disadvantaged in this approach. One strength of Ohio’s program is the inclusion of a detailed [rubric](#) to evaluate the OhioMeansJobs Readiness Seal competencies that provides every work-site supervisor with a clear, concise tool to guide conversations with students participating in WBL.

In Indiana, for instance, there is a dedicated state Office of Work based Learning and Apprenticeship<sup>8</sup> housed in the state’s Department of Workforce Development, notably not within the state department of education. The expectations around knowledge and skills acquired during WBL are framed as [Employability Skills](#), and are not aligned to core content or CTE programs of study, presumably because the participants are not necessarily students on a campus. On Indiana’s Department of Education website, there is a manual available for stakeholders to use. The sample agreements included in the manual ask students, in conjunction with their workplace mentor and teacher, to identify the relevant content standards addressed in the WBL experience. However, there is little guidance on which content standards should be included. This provides tremendous flexibility for employers and students in determining how closely the learning can or should be tied CTE or traditional academic standards. It also potentially results in inconsistent or inequitable acquisition and application of knowledge and skills even at the same worksite, in the same school and/or in the same CTE program.

Given the various stakeholders involved in ensuring quality WBL opportunities for students, there is no clear benefit to specify what the industry-specific learnings, skills and content must be during a WBL placement: in fact, there may be a disincentive to do so, because companies – especially small businesses – may be ill-suited to ensure the student experiences those particular learning opportunities. The flexibility, however, can be a slippery slope insomuch as students may not be participating in WBL activities that align with their career path. To that end, many states have adopted a blend of broad content-agnostic competencies they expect students will develop and practice while also naming industry-based competencies within the scope of a capstone or career practicum course.

Georgia has adopted one such model and its WBL standards merit close attention. The WBL course objectives are the standards specific to a WBL Placement. These objectives are a total of 7 per year with transcripts noting WBL Year One Placement, HS-WBL1; WBL Year Two Placement, HS-WBL2.<sup>9</sup> In Year 1, the course objectives are expected to be “entry-level” and progress to “intermediate level” in Year 2 of the WBL placement. There is a clear expectation that the WBL placement is a culmination of a series of courses linked to a career pathway, and not simply any part-

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<sup>8</sup> Overview of agency and WBL offerings: [https://www.in.gov/dwd/files/WBL\\_One\\_Pager.pdf](https://www.in.gov/dwd/files/WBL_One_Pager.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> This is similar to Texas in CTE practicum courses, i.e. Practicum in Manufacturing, where students have the opportunity to compound knowledge and skills increasing in difficulty year over year.

time job. The objectives<sup>10</sup> are competency-based and are applicable to wide array of worksites. The training plan is truly the guiding document to ensure that the academic and technical skills on site are learned, practiced and then evaluated by both the worksite mentor and the WBL Coordinator using guidelines on in the [WBL Coordinator's Manual](#).<sup>11</sup>

### **Capstone Standards**

Some states house WBL standards in the Career Practicum or Capstone CTE course of a particular program of study (e.g., Tennessee). Despite quite literally having an [Employability Checklist](#), students in Tennessee earn credit for WBL by participating in a [Career Practicum course](#). In these cases, the skills and content knowledge are very detailed and industry-specific; however, they allow the credit to be earned on-campus or at a worksite because there is recognition that various worksites will have a variety of tools, expectations and opportunities for the students they host. The values of this approach are many: there is broader participation in WBL because the typical barriers of spending time on a worksite (e.g., transportation, aligned worksite, competing priorities for time) are removed by building in the time, teacher and tools into a student's school day and onto their campus. It also ensures some degree of standardization of the skills students develop because they can be practiced on-campus or at an equivalent worksite: the employers are not expected to do all the teaching, but if a student prefers to learn at a workplace, they can still earn credit, money and the experience.

In Missouri, the standards and benchmarks for CTE courses are housed within documents called [instructional frameworks](#). Though Missouri does not explicitly have a WBL program outside of apprenticeships, the masonry instructional framework, for instance, has concrete benchmarks that could easily serve as industry-recognized learning outcomes for a WBL experience.

### **Embedded Standards**

South Dakota crafted standards specific types of WBL opportunities and calls them CTE: Capstone Experiences. These standards are agnostic of content and industry; as a result, these standards read like competencies. Some of the unpacked standards do include, however, very specific requirements that are tied to number of hours of relevant classroom training and worksite experience recommended.

Texas is also unique with respect to WBL standards in that they are embedded throughout the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The TEKS are the curriculum standards for state-approved courses for elementary and secondary schools. They state what students should know and be able to do by the completion of each course and can be found in the Texas Administrative Code (TAC). TEKS for the courses that include WBL are found in two chapters of the TAC, Title 19, Part 2; Chapters 127 and 130. Chapter 127 contains the academic and technical standards for career development courses. These are multi-cluster courses that provide students with the decision-making and problem-solving skills to help them identify and navigate their unique career development paths. Chapter 130 contains all the academic and technical standards for the state-approved courses for all 16 career clusters. The courses that predominantly use WBL are cluster-specific and are considered practicum courses.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/CTAE/Documents/2018-WBL-Manual-Combined-files.pdf> (see pp. 278-283)

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* (see pp. 246-247)

Massachusetts offers stakeholders clear [College & Career Advising \(CCA\) standards](#), though very little in terms of specific WBL standards or objectives.

Nebraska educators named several ways that WBL experiences allow students to develop new knowledge, often resulting in industry certification after successful completion.

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*“Our registered apprenticeship program is the top experience that we offer to where kids start that their second semester, their junior year. That goes all the way through the summer after they graduate, that culminates in that certification through US Department of Labor.” –Focus Group Participant (College and Career Readiness Director)*

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## Career Readiness Skills, and Personal and Social Skills

One goal of WBL is to prepare students for college and/or career. Nebraska’s Career Readiness Standards were developed collaboratively with stakeholders over a decade and unanimously approved by the Nebraska State Board of Education in December 2011.

### Nebraska Definition of Career Readiness

A career ready person capitalizes on personal strengths, talents, education and experiences to bring value to the workplace and the community through his/her performance, skill, diligence, ethics and responsible behavior.

The standards cover 11 areas aligned with the National Career Cluster Framework and are similar to several other states.

1. Applies Appropriate **Academic & Technical Skills**
2. **Communicates** Effectively & Appropriately
3. Contributes to **Employer & Community Success**
4. **Makes Sense of Problems** & Perseveres in Solving Them
5. Uses **Critical Thinking**
6. Demonstrates **Innovation & Creativity**
7. Models Ethical **Leadership & Effective Management**
8. **Works Productively in Teams** & Demonstrates Cultural Competency
9. Utilizes **Technology**
10. Manages **Personal Career Development**
11. Attends to **Personal & Financial Well-Being**

Nebraska’s Career Readiness Standards, and their implementation, reflect several notable strengths.

- **Crosswalked to ELA & Mathematics** – The alignment to these core course standards allows for teachers to see when and where the various standards are addressed in core courses.
- **Competency-based** – The competencies identified are industry-agnostic and can be developed in core content courses and throughout CTE courses and WBL opportunities.
- **Commonly Accepted** – The themes present in the adopted career-readiness standards are very similar to the ones adopted elsewhere and presented by the Association for Career & Technical Education.

Across all states, Career Readiness, Employability, Personal, and Social skills outline attributes that contribute to a student’s preparedness for career.

1. Several states align career readiness standards in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Framework including Virginia, Tennessee, and Iowa
2. Some states, such as South Dakota, assess career readiness standards through a student-driven, Capstone experiences aligned to academic and technical standards.
3. States such as Colorado (Entrepreneurial, Personal, Civic/Interpersonal, and Professional) and Massachusetts (Ethics and Professionalism, Communication and Interpersonal, civic readiness) bucket skills into high-level categories.
4. States such as Virginia, Texas, and Georgia break progression and assessment of career readiness standards in two years. Colorado similarly provides examples across multiple levels of mastery – *Novice, Advanced Beginner, Strategic Learner, Advanced Beginner*.
5. Texas, for example, implicitly embeds personal and socials skills throughout all grades through the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills and also throughout CTE courses.

Examples of how career readiness skills are reflected in expectations for WBL experiences.

State	Strategy for incorporating career readiness skills	Artifacts/Notes
Iowa	<p>Employability Skills for students in K-12 are explicit and a part of the state's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Framework which is part of the Iowa Core.</p> <p><i>Example language: Students will adapt to various roles and responsibilities and work flexibly in climates of ambiguity and changing priorities</i></p>	<p><a href="#">Iowa Core 21st Century Skills and Standards (K-12)</a></p>
Tennessee	<p>Created by 225 various stakeholders throughout the state, and inclusive of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning &amp; Innovation Skills</p> <p><i>Example language: Students will demonstrate industry-specific technical and safety skills</i></p>	<p><a href="#">Tennessee WBL Employability Skills</a></p>
South Dakota	<p>The Capstone Experiences have standards that are unpacked by experience type (e.g. apprenticeships vs. internship vs. entrepreneurship experiences have related standards)</p> <p><i>Example language: Students will perform daily work tasks consistent with the responsibilities and work culture of the chosen internship field</i></p>	<p><a href="#">Capstone Experience Standards by experience type</a></p>

Career readiness skills – primarily, understanding the ins-and-outs of being a successful job applicant and future employee, including skills for interacting with supervisors and colleagues – were frequently discussed during educator focus groups.

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*“We’ve really stepped up what that looks like to focus on pre-readiness skills in alignment with NDE as well as interviewing skills. We do mock interviews with local businesses and business leaders. We work on resume and cover letter application development, things like that too...That’s been a huge undertaking for us this year but it’s going to be absolutely wonderful moving forward.” –Focus Group Participant (CTE Teacher)*

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Students also noted the career readiness skills developed through their WBL experiences.

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*“Work based learning has helped me improve my problem solving skills, and learning what I may want to do for a career someday.” –Student Survey Respondent*

*“The most beneficial thing about my work-based learning experiences is learning career communication skills.” –Student Survey Respondent*

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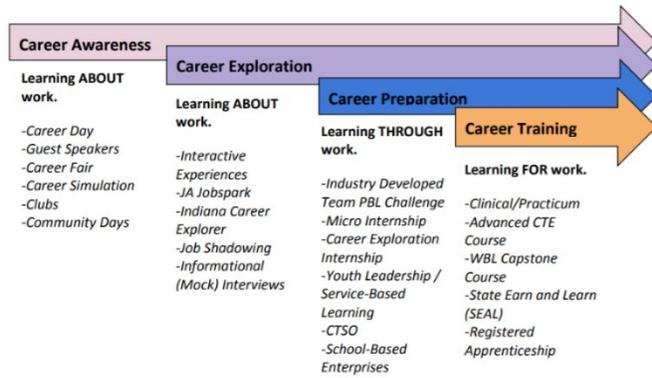
### Frameworks and Continuum Models for WBL

Frameworks of WBL vary throughout the country. Philosophically, there is broad alignment in terms of the framework or continua of learning from early learning through high school.

WBL is often included in the Career Preparation and/or final phase of development, just as it is in Nebraska. The significance of CTSOs is present and a strength of the framework Nebraska leverages. Though some states tease out practicum or clinicals as separate from WBL experiences, most states include those opportunities. Some continua categorize the specific WBL experiences under broader topics, like Nebraska.

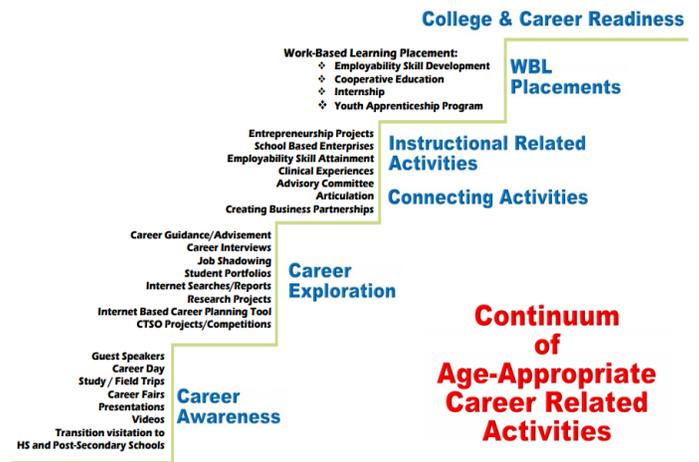


**WBL Continuum and Definitions**



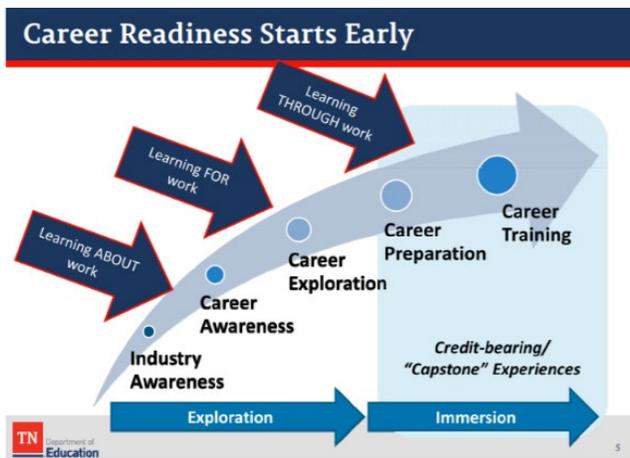
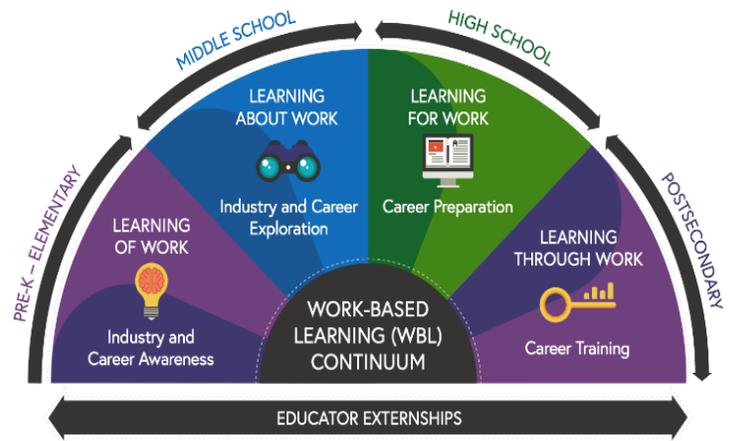
For instance, in Indiana, the WBL continuum for Indiana makes a distinction between career preparation and career training. In this instance, the advanced CTE course counts equally as the equivalent to a registered apprenticeship. This allows for students to engage in career training on-campus instead of at a work-site. Interestingly, CTSOs are considered an option for Career Preparation in Indiana.

Georgia’s continuum, by comparison, teases out the location of the learning – on a work-site—as WBL placements<sup>12</sup>. It is worth noting here that these are the specific opportunities WBL Coordinators are responsible to orchestrate for the students on their campus. This type of distinction offers clarity for expectations of the WBL coordinators and their outcomes. It is worth noting here that there is clarity in the WBL Coordinator’s Handbook that the Connecting Activities require the support of the CTAE teachers, counselors and various campus-based administrators and that all the stakeholders need to ensure that the local business community is actively involved in the connecting activities. CTSOs are mentioned only in the Career Exploration phase for Georgia, perhaps because these are clubs and extracurricular opportunities.



<sup>12</sup> As mentioned in the WBL Coordinator’s Manual, the ages determined for all steps of Georgia’s continuum are grades 6-12. Work-based learning placements are for students 16+.

The WBL continuum from Texas differs from the other state models in a few ways: first, in its consideration of when to engage students and its broad scope. It frames WBL as a continuum to include the youngest and oldest students: Pre-K through postsecondary. With its inclusion of postsecondary explicitly and specifically in WBL, it offers the opportunity for communities to consider the role of expanding articulation agreements. There is a notable absence of which named experiences occur during specific grade-bands; however, career explorations happen as early as primary and continue to and through postsecondary. This flexibility allows for CTE campus leadership and regional leadership to defined and build out the programs as they see fit and may lead to a variability of experience throughout.



Tennessee, by contrast, steers away from specifying age group or location or even specific type of WBL experience in their framework. The framing of exploration leading to immersion offers stakeholders a sense of the progression. This simplicity offers flexibility to the CTE teachers, directors and WBL coordinators in the state. In fact, the [Career Practicum](#) is descriptive and offers examples for any stakeholder to determine whether it qualifies as that level of credit. Also, because equal credit is possible for a WBL experience on a work-site or in a Capstone Course for a program of study, this offers the opportunity for broader participation and

more equitable access. The resources and tools that need to be available for students to use and become familiar with to achieve this level of immersion might be a barrier in more rural or less well-resourced regions of the state. The knowledge developed throughout the career readiness continuum and up to the practicum, is captured [here](#).

## High-Quality WBL Implementation

### Specific WBL Options

Beyond the broad definition of WBL, states are still wrestling with how to codify and classify the specific WBL opportunities offered to their students. Currently, Nebraska has 10 WBL strategies that are all tied to some form of classroom instruction:

- Apprenticeships
- Cooperative education

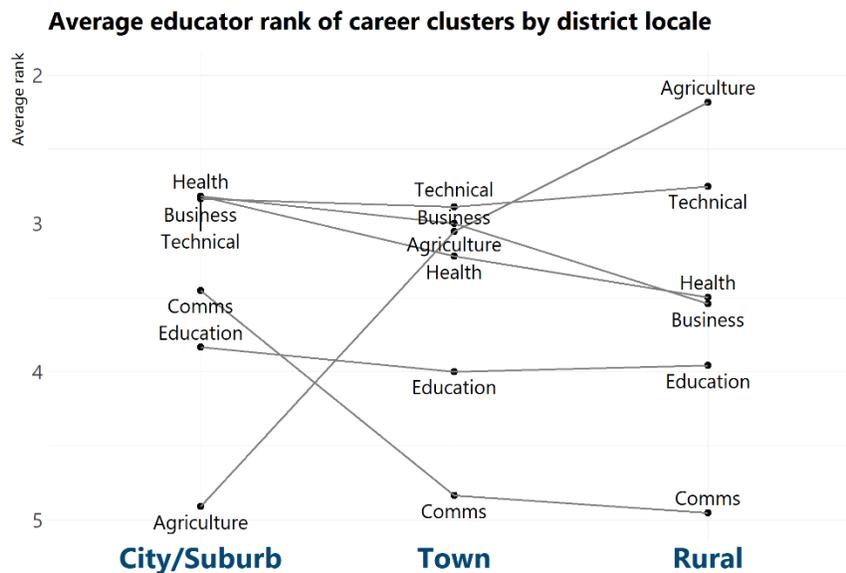
- Education & training experience
- Entrepreneurship
- Health Science Clinical
- Internship
- Youth Apprenticeship
- Rule 47 Career Academy Internship
- School-based Enterprises
- Supervised Agricultural Experiences

**Common forms of participation in WBL for Nebraska educators and students**

In surveys, 66% of educators who responded indicated that there was at least one WBL opportunity in a class they teach, and 47% of 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> grade students who responded said they have participated in at least one WBL opportunity. Most students who participated in WBL said they work fewer than ten hours per week (62%) and very few said they work more than twenty hours (8%).

Education/Training Field Experiences and Internships were the most common offerings identified by both educators and students. Health Science Clinicals were also common in urban districts, and supervised Agricultural Experiences were common in town and rural districts. No respondents to either the educator or student survey indicated participation in Intern Nebraska, Rule 47 Academy, or Youth Internships, although respondents may have simply chosen the more general category of “Internships” and not differentiated the type.

Educators ranked Skilled Technical Sciences as the most common job/internship cluster among their students, but rankings differed by district locale: Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources was ranked higher in town and rural districts, while Health Sciences and Business, Marketing, and Management were perceived as less common. In the upper grades, students’ experiences generally agreed with the educator rankings, although participation in Skilled Technical Sciences was lower.



Interestingly, Nebraska’s offering of 10 types of WBL experiences is a larger number of options than the average number of WBL offerings in the states we studied. Specifically:

- Tennessee offers [7 within the Career Practicum](#).
- Iowa [offers four within their “Workplace Learning” phase](#) of WBL
- Georgia offers 4 WBL placements: Employability skill development, Co-Op education, Internship and a Youth Apprenticeship Program. Similarly, Iowa offers 4 activities within their Workbased Learning phase, including: Registered Apprenticeships, Pre-Apprenticeships, On-the-job training/Co-ops, and Internships.
- Wyoming’s offerings mirror Georgia’s and include one additional opportunity: externships.
- South Dakota offers 5 Capstone Experiences including: Youth Internships, Senior Experience, Entrepreneurship Experience, Service Learning and Youth Apprenticeships. South Dakota offers [5 Capstone Experiences](#) as WBL.
- Indiana (see visual at right) offers six, including the [State Earn and Learn](#) (or SEAL).
- Virginia recently redesigning their High-Quality WBL methods of instruction effective July 2020.

### **WBL Staffing and Coordination**

Another critical component of high-quality WBL implementation is staffing and coordination. In Nebraska, the WBL opportunities are supervised and/or coordinated by different people, depending on the location and the opportunity. The specific individuals responsible for WBL coordination vary across the state. For example, in a small rural district, we spoke to a CTE teacher who is solely responsible for WBL, while in a large metropolitan region, coordination was handled at the Educational Service Unit (ESU). In yet another region, an independent community partnership facilitated connections between students from multiple school districts and regional employers. Based on student and educator survey responses, we infer that the person or people responsible for WBL coordination serves a gatekeeping role, controlling the flow of information about WBL processes and opportunities to individual students. While it does not appear from surveys and focus groups that there is intentional bias in which students gain access to this critical information, it does seem to be the case that WBL gatekeepers may inadvertently contribute to inequities in which students have access to information and might partly explain why some students reported being unclear about how to access WBL placements.

Comparison state approaches to WBL coordination may provide models to refine Nebraska’s approach.

*Georgia School-Based Coordination.* Georgia’s implementation plan hinges on the “one school-wide WBL coordinator” model to deliver WBL. The WBL coordinator at each school serves all students and coordinated placements related to the students’ career pathway and has a very thorough [manual](#) as a resource. All categories of WBL are administered by the coordinator with a few exceptions for Healthcare Clinical Experiences and Practicum courses that are part of the defined pathway.

*Iowa’s Intermediary Model.* Iowa designed the Intermediary Model as a competitive, grant divided equally across each of the fifteen regions. Each region is served by a community college and the personnel works on the campus. As part of their role, these Intermediary personnel sit on a variety of local school, community and college boards to build sustainable, informed relationships between community, industry and education. They also join various other regional planning committees, including Iowa STEM, Area Education Agencies (AEAs), and CTSOs. The regional Intermediary personnel build a one-stop shop for industry partners, educators and students from throughout the region to connect and supports the identification and execution of high-quality WBL opportunities for any K-12 student in the region. To ensure the opportunities match student interest and labor market need,

most regional offices conduct a local needs assessment and build out the programming to address those needs. This model values the unique needs and challenges of various regions, while centralizing support. The results are significant and captured in an [annual report](#). The level of data transparency, including reporting at the regional level, is a particular strength of this approach.

*Tennessee WBL Coordinator Certification.* Tennessee offers WBL coordinator certifications for classroom teachers who hold an appropriate endorsement for the WBL course to be taught. This can, and often does, result in many staff members at the same campus being certified as a WBL coordinator and supporting students in their on-site placements. Generally, there is a CTE Director on campus who ensures efforts are duplicated around WBL coordination and that the data is gathered and shared out to relevant state and federal agencies. This kind of widespread coordination may lead to some duplicative efforts without a CTE Director's oversight; however, it also opens the door to connect with a very robust community of local business and industry.

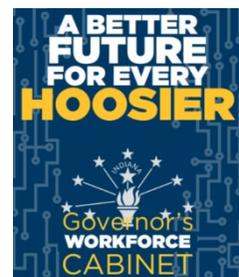
### **Characteristics of High-Quality WBL Implementation Practices**

Generally speaking, states with robust WBL opportunities leverage a statewide, audacious, robust goal that is initiated at the executive branch and convenes relevant state-based agencies to collaborate.



For instance, in 2013, Tennessee's governor launched "Drive to 55" with the intent that 55% of Tennesseans would graduate with a certificate or a college degree by 2025, and this goal was rooted in the labor data that reflected that 55% of the jobs in the state will require at least some form of postsecondary education<sup>13</sup>. This catalyzed K-12, post-secondary and workforce partners towards a clear, concise, substantive goal, and supported the development of robust partnerships throughout the state to that end. It also provided the legislative support and funding needed to ensure to meet the goal.

In 2018, a similar type of unification happened in Indiana: the Governor convened a Governor's Workforce Cabinet (GWC) with "the mission of addressing current and future education and employment needs for individuals and employers, strengthening Indiana's economy by integrating and aligning...resources." The GWC "includes: the business community, K-12 representatives, postsecondary institutions, Indiana lawmakers, and leaders from Indiana state agencies."<sup>14</sup> In March 2020, the GWC redoubled their efforts, crafted a strategic plan called [A Better Future for Every Hoosier that](#) they will submit as their Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) plan.



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<sup>13</sup> [Drive to 55 Alliance](#)

<sup>14</sup> See [Governor's Workforce Cabinet Announcements](#)



In Ohio, The [Governor’s Executive Workforce Board’s](#) stated purpose and mission that it “engages communities state agencies, and stakeholders in Ohio to identify ways to prepare Ohioans with skills needed for in-demand jobs.” The members are “innovative leaders in business, education, and workforce development. They are responsible for advising the Governor, Lt. Governor, and Office of Workforce Transformation about emerging workforce needs, solutions and best practices.”

In Iowa, Governor Reynolds set a goal for 70% of Iowa’s workforce to have education or training beyond high school by 2025. She implemented an Executive Order that started the [Future Ready Iowa Alliance](#). This organization was created after Iowa won a National Governors Association Grant.

### Resources

Regardless of the model of WBL implemented throughout any given state, there are some resources and tools that various stakeholders need to access readily. Nebraska offers a [Quick Start manual](#) with some guidance for campus-based professionals to develop, establish and assess their WBL opportunities. This document also delineates the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders with links offering support or clarity. There are also recordings of Office Hours sessions held on specific topics for practitioners to reference and review.

Below are the various resources and databases shared by states for statewide use.

State	Resource
Georgia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <a href="#">WBL Manual</a> is for the Coordinator.</li> <li>Georgia CNET is the official database for work-based learning students. It allows coordinators to customize training plans, track progress and keep histories of employer/student information</li> </ul>
Tennessee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">WBL Implementation Guide</a> with a Before, During and After approach to WBL for coordinators to consider.</li> <li><a href="#">WBL Toolbox</a></li> <li><a href="#">Promising Practices in College &amp; Career Readiness</a> offers proof-points and celebrates districts and regions.</li> </ul>
Massachusetts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Skills Pages Website</a>: Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Resources</li> <li><a href="#">Massachusetts Career Ready Database</a> is maintained by the state’s (ESE) Connecting Activities initiative and houses: summer jobs, transition programs, internship programs, Co-Ops, YouthWorks, WIOA Youth and community service opportunities. It is designed for all stakeholders including students, employers, program staff, teachers and Co-Op education coordinators.</li> <li><a href="#">Standards Navigator</a></li> </ul>
Virginia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">CanDo: Virginia’s Online Competency-Tracking System</a> maintains records for all CTE courses. It is built on open-source software that can be used in any school division and is available for all public school divisions and technical centers.</li> </ul>
Colorado	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">ICAP Implementation Toolkit</a> complete with rationale, key messages and talking points and readiness rubrics.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Colorado Community College System Postsecondary Workforce Readiness Handbook</a> ties K-12 and postsecondary workforce readiness together.</li> <li>• Recordings of <a href="#">WBL Incubator Webinar Series</a></li> </ul>
Ohio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Career Connections</a> includes resources for parents, students, employers and educators.</li> </ul>
Iowa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Iowa Intermediary Network</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">The Clearinghouse for Work-Based Learning</a> “connects students and employers through shared projects that give students professional experience.”</li> </ul>

### Transparency as a Tool for Equity

Sharing out the results from WBL and other relevant data around programming and participation in WBL are a means to promote and grow the program, celebrate industry and businesses who support the students and can shine a light on any potential disparities in resources, engagement and participation in the program.

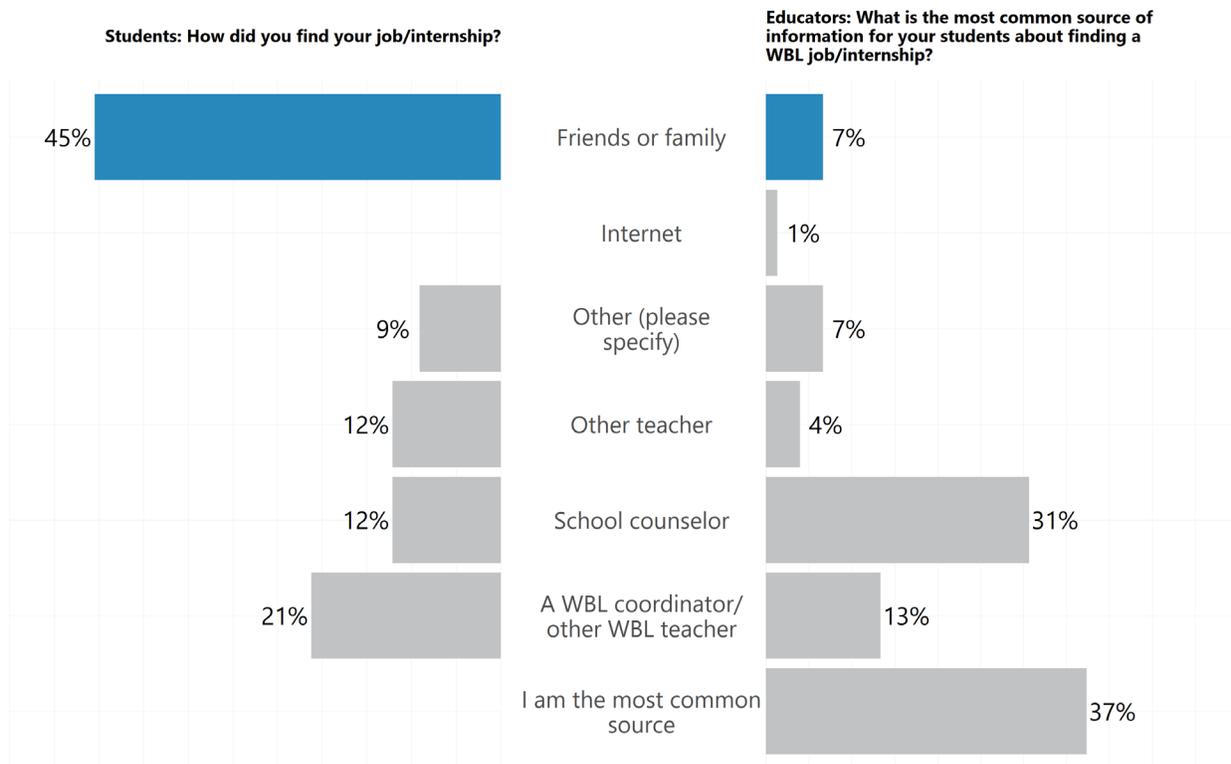
- Tennessee shared with the National Governors Association this [presentation](#) with metrics they measure to ensure their WBL programs are student-centered, implemented with fidelity and aligned with district/regional goals.
- Georgia’s WBL site includes a section entitled [“By the Numbers”](#) so that stakeholders can see at a very high level how engaged students are in the various offerings and programming available.
- Under resources and links, [Indiana](#) shares labor market data by region to support practitioners in determining which careers are in high-demand. Indiana also has made strides in publishing data around postsecondary [credentialling](#) broadly.
- Massachusetts shares qualitative data around expectations of students is shared and searchable through the [Standards Navigator](#).
- The annual Iowa Intermediary [annual report](#) offers quantitative and qualitative data on impact across the 15 regions served.

## Stakeholder Experiences with Work-Based Learning

### Knowledge about WBL opportunities

Students and educators had different perceptions of where students find job/internship information; more specifically, educators may underestimate parents’ influence on students’ career planning and opportunities.

When asked how they found their job/internship, upper grade students’ most common answer by far was friends or family at 45%, much higher than the 7% figure given by educators. Educators believed that they (37%) or a school counselor (31%) were the most common source of information. When asked “Where have you learned the most about careers?” the most common answer from students was their parents, yet parent involvement was only the fourth-highest factor by educator agreement.



Overall, educators believe that students are guided toward careers based on what’s best suited for their interest and skill sets (68%) and based on the reputation of those careers (56%), not based on racial or socioeconomic background (13%). Compared to urban educators, those in rural districts were more likely to agree that students are guided by the advice of a counselor and by what’s best suited for their interests, and less likely to agree that students are guided based on career reputation and affordability. Most educators across all locales (78%) said they have awareness of top careers/industries in their region and have at least some idea of how students can participate.

### WBL Benefits

Students and educators generally agreed that WBL teaches students skills like problem-solving and communication.

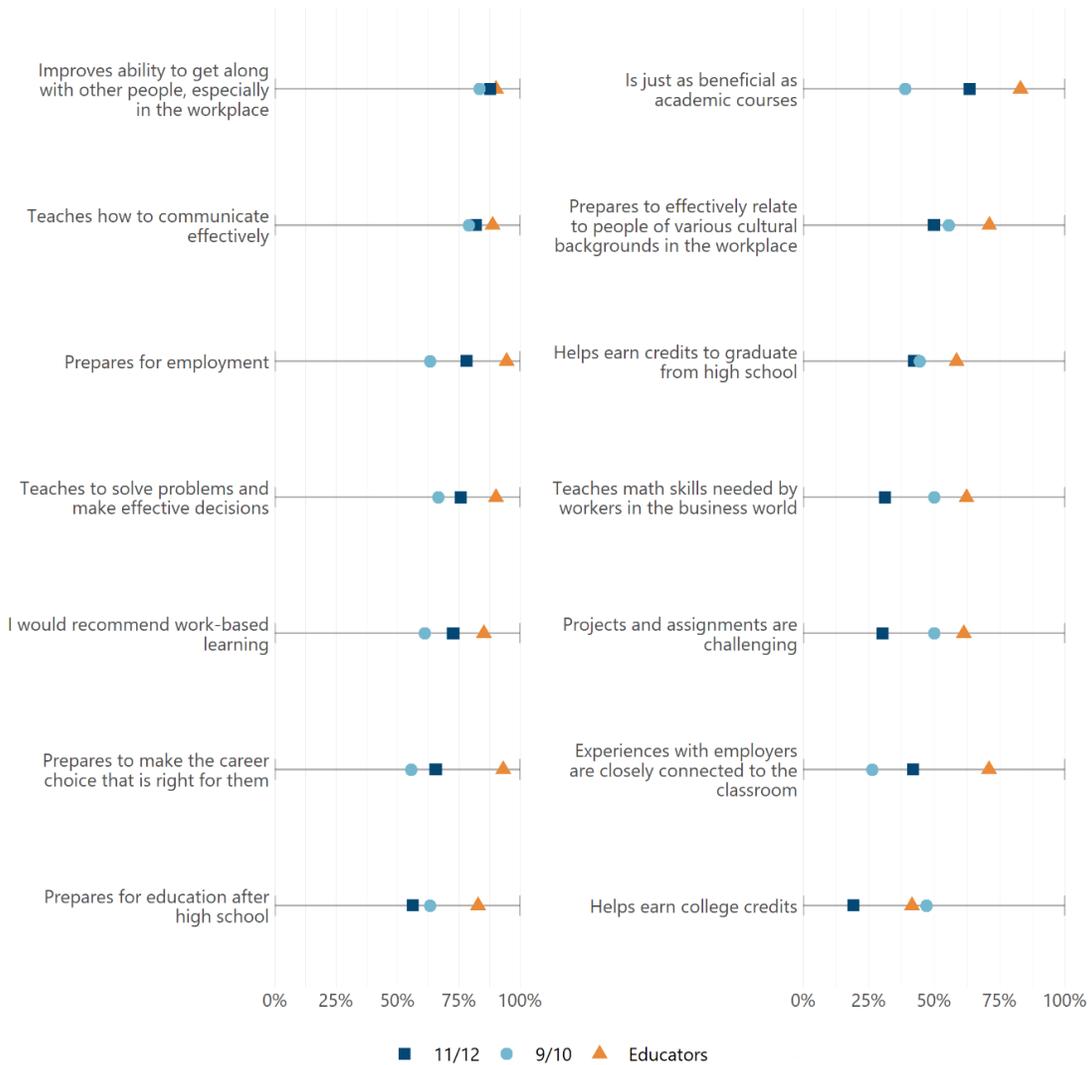
Educators felt that WBL prepares students for employment overall (94%), and more specifically teaches them how to get along with others (90%), solve problems and make effective decisions (90%), and communicate effectively (89%). They also agreed that WBL prepares students to make the career choice that is right for them (93%). Compared to those in urban areas, educators in rural districts agreed less that WBL prepares students for education after high school and that WBL prepares students to relate effectively to people of various cultural and racial backgrounds. Overall, educators agreed least that WBL helps students earn credits toward college (42%) or high school (58%).

Student respondents gave similar top answers to educators; they tended to agree that WBL teaches them communication and problem-solving skills as well as helping them learn more about their career(s) of interest.

*"I have learned a lot about what people do in the job I want." –Student Survey Respondent*

*"The most beneficial parts of interning at the hospital are being able to push myself, making myself more independent and confident in myself, and having a safe environment to ask questions about my career field." –Student Survey Respondent*

However, most students did not feel that WBL experiences are closely connected to what they learn in the classroom, have challenging projects and assignments, or teach math skills needed by workers in the business world. Where there were differences by grade level, students in the upper grades agreed more that WBL is as beneficial as academics and is connected to their classroom learning but agreed less that WBL helps them earn college credits, teaches them math skills needed by workers, and has challenging projects and assignments.



## WBL Barriers

Some of the most-cited WBL barriers stem from a lack of information for both students and businesses.

Students' top reasons for not participating in WBL included:

- They don't know how to get involved in WBL (42%)
- Teachers haven't recommended WBL to them (38%)
- They have other responsibilities that prevent them from participating in WBL (36%)
- In the upper grades:
  - No businesses offer internships in the field they'd like to participate in (29%)
  - No businesses offer paid internships, and they need to work for pay (28%)
- In the lower grades: WBL would happen at a time that conflicts with other responsibilities (30%)

Educators who indicated that they did not participate in any WBL offerings said the biggest barriers for their students are the lack of a WBL program (61%) and students' competing responsibilities (59%). Regarding businesses, the two top barriers given by educators (by a large margin) were lack of information about how to create WBL opportunities (82%) and lack of dedicated staff to focus on education partnerships (62%). Further, in focus groups, educators consistently mentioned that there are not enough high-quality WBL opportunities available for all interested students. This was particularly acute in high-demand placements, such as hospitals, construction sites, and early childhood education centers. Educators described turning away interested students because there were more applicants for opportunities than positions available.

Very few respondents in either the educator or student survey said that computer/internet access or students' families were barriers, and transportation is cited less than might be expected (possibly because rural areas are underrepresented in the samples).

## Importance of WBL Coordinators

WBL coordinators appear to be hallmarks of more robust WBL opportunities. 56% of educators said their school has a person or organization who coordinates with local employers to create WBL opportunities; the rest didn't or were unsure. Those with a coordinator experienced WBL differently than those who did not have a coordinator:

### HAS COORDINATOR

**90%** have at least one WBL opportunity in a class they teach

**35%** rural districts

More awareness of careers and pathways

Agree that businesses need more info and dedicated staff, but disagree with most other items

### NO/UNSURE

**48%** have at least one WBL opportunity in a class they teach

**72%** rural districts

Less awareness of careers and pathways

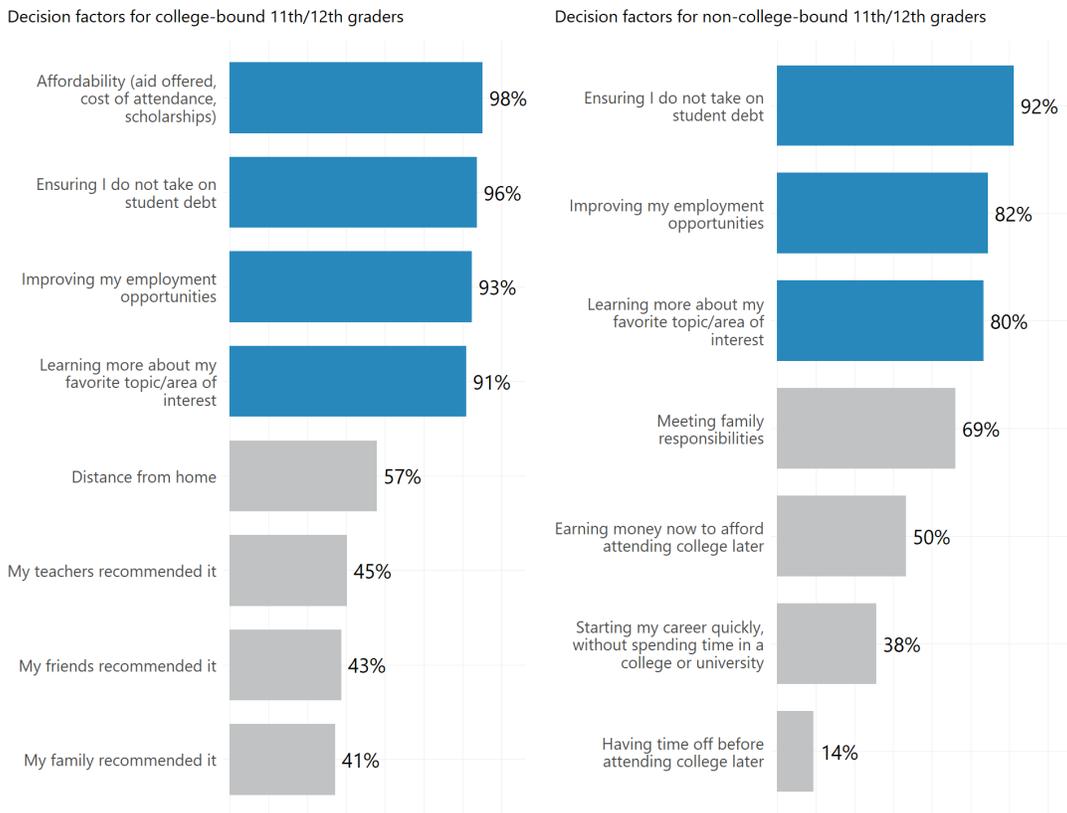
More likely to agree with every business-related WBL barrier item—92% say businesses need more info

When individual teachers or school-based administrators are solely responsible for WBL program management, including recruiting businesses and coordinating placement of students, they are typically playing this role alongside other responsibilities. In focus groups, we heard several anecdotes related to transitions of WBL program management as a result of teacher retirement or moves into new roles. When these transitions occurred, the incoming teacher/coordinator generally started from scratch with rebuilding employer relationships and processes for managing the program. A dedicated WBL Coordinator could help institutionalize relationships, processes, and procedures, and limit the disruption of future transitions even when they occur.

### WBL as Part of Students' Future Plans

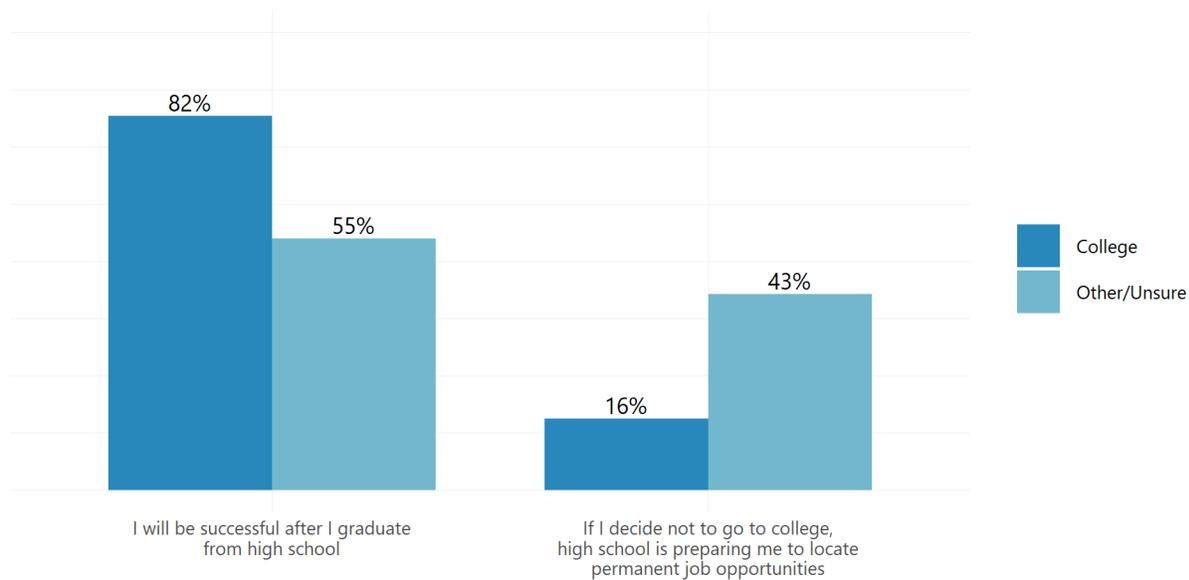
Most 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders plan to attend college; 69% of upper grade students plan to attend college in some capacity, and 57% plan to attend a 4-year college or university. College bound students in the upper grades cited factors related to money and career path/opportunities as most important in deciding where to attend college, while recommendations from others (friends, family, teachers) played a smaller role in their decision.

The remainder are either planning for something other than college (19%, including 11% who plan to work full time or complete a certificate through a trade school or other program) or are unsure about their future plans (13%). The top decision factors of this no college/unsure group are similar to those of the college-bound group: they want to avoid taking on debt while improving their employment opportunities and learning more about their area of interest. Some who are not college bound or are unsure may be planning to attend college later (50% of this group agreed with "Earning money now to afford attending college later" as a factor in their decision).



Students are generally optimistic about their future careers, but not necessarily because of their experiences in high school.

Overall, students have high expectations for their futures; 71% expect to make a good income when they complete their education, and 69% believe they will be successful after high school. However, this optimism may not necessarily be related to high school preparation. Only 35% feel their teachers and counselors have helped them take the courses they need to be successful, and 34% feel that high school is preparing them locate permanent job opportunities if they decide not to attend college. There were also stark differences in outlook among 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders depending on their plans for the future: college-bound students were more likely to believe they'll be successful after high school (82% vs. 55%) and less likely to believe that high school is preparing them if they forgo college (16% vs. 43%).



## Funding Work-Based Learning

### Leveraging State Funds

Two major funding streams that support WBL across the country are state and federal funds. In most states, schools can access per-pupil funding to cover some of the operational costs of WBL courses and activities. States have expanded the funding of WBL opportunities in two different ways: (1) establishing a dedicated, recurring source of funding, or (2) creating grant opportunities or time-bound funding streams that typically support the launch of programs. Across the country, 10% of states have a dedicated, recurring source of state funding, 37% of states have some partial, time-bound funding opportunities, and 53% of states have no dedicated source of state funding.<sup>15</sup> Below are some examples:

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<sup>15</sup> ASA-Bellwether Education Partners publication: [Working to Learn and Learning to Work: A State-by-State Analysis of High School Work-based Learning Policies](#)

Dedicated Sources of State Funding	Partial, Time-bound Funding Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In <b>Iowa</b>, the state legislature appropriated \$1.45 million to the DOE to develop and implement a statewide network comprising 15 regional intermediary networks.</li> <li>• <b>Massachusetts</b> has a line item in the state’s annual budget that funds its Connecting Activities and Innovation Pathways to serve as intermediaries that broker connections between school districts and employers/community-based organization in their regions</li> <li>• <b>South Carolina</b> provides dedicated funding to districts to support WBL. These funds can be leveraged to hire WBL coordinators, integrate programming, provide PD, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Colorado</b> state law provides districts with \$1,000 per student that successfully earns an industry certificate or completes a qualified internship or pre-apprenticeship program</li> <li>• The <b>Texas</b> Workforce Commission provides funds to LEAs and apprenticeship committees to support the costs of job-related classroom instruction.</li> <li>• <b>Tennessee</b> has the GIVE program and the WBL Demonstration Grant to support WBL in the state.</li> <li>• <b>Virginia</b> set aside \$2 million in 2020 to support apprenticeship programs.</li> </ul>

### Financial Incentives for Employers

In addition to state funding that supports the creation, implementation or sustainability of WBL programs, some states have leveraged financial incentives or tax credits to offset costs on the employer side and encourage businesses to partner with schools to offer WBL opportunities. These financial incentives are key to making WBL opportunities more robust with access to and partnerships with more employers. Many states have tax credit programs specifically for businesses that offer registered apprenticeships or that have an internships program

#### Apprenticeship examples:

- Iowa Apprenticeship Act provides grants for eligible apprenticeship programs
- Massachusetts – Registered Apprenticeship Tax Credit (RATC)
- Tennessee – employers receive tax credit of \$2000 or 10% of wages earned by apprentice
- Virginia – tax credit for providing eligible worker retraining, including approved apprentices

#### Internship examples:

- Colorado - The School-to-Career Investment Credit allows Colorado taxpayers to claim a tax credit for money expended for wages, insurance, or training expenses to employ a student or allow a student to participate in an internship through a qualified school-to-career program
- South Dakota - Under the Dakota Seeds program, businesses can receive matching funds up to \$2,000 per intern for internships in STEM fields, manufacturing, and accounting.
- Indiana - The Next Level Jobs Employer Training Grant reimburses employers up to \$5,000 per employee trained and retained for six months.

### Leveraging Federal Funds

States most commonly access federal funding to support WBL through Perkins V or WIOA, both of which Nebraska leverages. Fifty-seven percent of states across the country have selected WBL as a program quality indicator in their Perkins V plans. Most immediately relevant, all federal coronavirus relief funds that are relevant to CTE or WBL can be used on any expenditure allowed under Perkins. Since Nebraska has designated WBL in its Perkins V grant plan, it can allocate federal relief funding to support WBL activities.

There are three main funding sources under the CARES Act, CRRSAA and the ARP Act that are relevant to WBL activities: (1) GEER – Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Fund (2) ESSER – Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund and (3) HEERF – High Education Emergency Relief Fund. The latest round of relief funding, the American Rescue Plan, allocated significant amounts of funding for ESSER (\$121.9B) and HEERF (\$39.6B). Since these funds need to be used over the next three years, states are required to think strategically about maximizing long-term impact from short-term funding.

In prioritizing the use of federal relief funds, a key consideration is balancing short-term needs and systemic reforms. A common refrain being used to describe funding decisions is to find “solutions, not Band-Aids.”

The Southern Regional Education Board<sup>16</sup> offers a framework for utilizing these funds, broken down into three major steps:

**Step 1: Immediate Needs.** Identify and address immediate needs that have arisen as a result of the pandemic.

**Step 2: Systemic Improvement.** Identify projects and programs to accelerate that will yield systemic improvements that address both short-term and long-term needs.

**Step 3: Progress Monitoring.** Identify metrics, feedback loops and accountability systems to enable tracking progress and measuring the impact of investments.

Knowing that a lot of work has been done already to address the immediate needs that have arisen from the pandemic (examples include investments in personal protective equipment, hotspots for virtual learning, etc.), the next section focuses on Step 2: Systemic Improvement to break it down further.

To maximize funding strategically and systemically in support of WBL, leaders in Nebraska may consider the strategies related to “acceleration” outlined below. Utilizing the concept of **acceleration** to anchor ideas around utilizing federal relief funds allows states to leverage the short-term nature of federal relief funds while prioritizing long-term impact. Since these funds will not continue past 2024, it is important to plan for sustainability and think very critically about any recurring costs, ranging from staffing, maintenance, technology replacement, ongoing professional development, etc. Three guiding principles to consider in evaluating investments -

1. **Center Equity in Decision Making.** The pandemic has exposed and worsened the inequities within every sector of the economy, particularly education. It is important to ensure that discussions around equity are integrated into decisions around investments.
2. **Think Big and Look for Solutions that Meet Multiple Needs.** Through living and working in a pandemic, states and districts have been focused on short-term solutions to solve immediate needs. It is important to zoom out and think about the bigger, system issues that need to be addressed. Especially in WBL, there are many opportunities for crossover and overlap between educators, communities, businesses, and other organizations.

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<sup>16</sup> Southern Regional Education Board [Recovery Planning Guide](#)

3. **Expand and Scale Proven Strategies.** *There are programs in place that have been constrained by funding to pilot programs or implemented at a limited number of locations. It is important to keep those programs in discussions to ensure existing investments and proven strategies are leveraged.*

Using these guiding principles to build on the concept of **acceleration**, below is a list of potential ideas<sup>17</sup> around systemic improvement. These are categorized into projects, programs and investments in capital equipment that could be accelerated.

#### **Potential Accelerating Projects:**

- Ramp up implementation of modular, stackable and competency-based delivery models
- Development of virtual platforms for advising and academic support and interim positions for advisors and success coaches for students
- Development of rapid credentialing programs
- Implement programs for new industries/areas
- Develop data and reporting systems to place students, track participation, evaluate quality of programs, reveal longer term trends & preparedness measures; designed to leverage predictive analytics to identify struggling students early
- Pilot programs as a proof point for future funding – transportation to WBL sites, mentoring with local employers or community leaders
- Develop online resource repositories
- Institutionalize virtual career development and WBL (virtual job shadowing, industry expert videos, counseling sessions, simulations that can substitute for practicum or clinical hours required for licensing)
- New technology – video cameras/programs that facilitate demonstrations while maintaining social distancing, augmented and virtual reality simulations to help students practice skills safely before going on a worksite, computer-aided instructional programs, learning management systems, virtual desktop interfaces to access specific software, chatbots (and professional development to support all of this)
- Expand broadband access more broadly across communities and institutionalize technology access

#### **Potential Accelerating Programs:**

- Grow youth and adult apprenticeships and internships to help students build and practice skills in real-world setting (virtual opportunities and connections with intermediaries)
- Providing release time for educators to work directly with employers (ex. Liaisons, co-designed curriculum, teacher externship experiences, substitute costs)
- Support WBL coordinators or supervisors (along with a plan for sustaining the support)
- Professional development needed to support the implementation of any project, especially when accelerated (guest speakers, workshops, externships, subs for teachers to spend time on PD, update content knowledge, earn latest certifications, access in-depth training, provide career development professionals with labor market information)
- Extend operating hours of schools or programs, ensuring health, safety and access
- Free summer tuition to help get student back on track

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<sup>17</sup> Many potential ideas adapted from ACTE Online's [Leveraging Federal Relief Funds at the Local Level](#)

- Ramping up career exploration programs, particularly in areas where activities had to be canceled (support counselors, success coaches and career exploration coordinators); purchase or build technology solutions that can be used well after funds are expended
- Summer jobs programs incorporate opportunities to earn relevant industry credentials (costs include developing wrap-around curriculum, coordinating with partner services, paying student wages, paying WBL coordinators to oversee and support, providing assessments linked to industry certifications or licenses)

**Potential Accelerating Investments in Capital Equipment:**

- Upgrading lab equipment and technology
- Investments to develop new programs in in-demand industries
- Expanding lab capacity to accommodate more students
- Facility renovations
- Technology investment for increased use of video, mobile labs that can allow for more hands-on practice in different locations, central facilities for students to visit as needed or hands-on learning at worksites
- Additional tools and equipment

Below are some examples of how states have utilized ESSER I, ESSER II and GEER funding to date to support various CTE initiatives:<sup>18</sup>

ESSER I	GEER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Arkansas:</b> Providing students enrolled in CTE courses access to digital curriculum for all career clusters and resources that support industry certification assessments, create digital CTE courses for complete pathways, and provide digital WBL simulation and remote engagement with industry professionals.</li> <li>• <b>Kentucky:</b> Funding additional staff or additional work days for staff at state operated area technology centers (ATC), technology and online curricula supports for those staff to support remote learning (including specialized CTE course software).</li> <li>• <b>Louisiana:</b> Providing software licenses and subscriptions to online course and content providers for CTE. Working with one or more approved planning partners for individual graduation planning for students in grades 9-12 and/or college and career transitions for graduated seniors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Alaska:</b> Funding for Alaska Native Science &amp; Engineering Program.</li> <li>• <b>Delaware:</b> Expanding the advanced career pathways for patient care and construction.</li> <li>• <b>Florida:</b> Grants to LEAs to provide resources to build infrastructure &amp; increase enrollment and capacity in high-demand CTE programs.</li> <li>• <b>Idaho:</b> CTE funding for curriculum and instructional support materials for both distance learning and face-to-face settings; online instructional practices professional development, including session live-streaming and recording; and cameras and virtual training equipment to provide alternative ways to capture performance on use of equipment</li> <li>• <b>Pennsylvania:</b> Resources to support learners in CTE programs and adult basic education as they pursue advanced degrees and industry-recognized credentials on virtual platforms.</li> <li>• <b>South Carolina:</b> Establish the South Carolina Workforce Journey’s initiative, which will provide career exploration and job preparation resources.</li> </ul>
ESSER II	

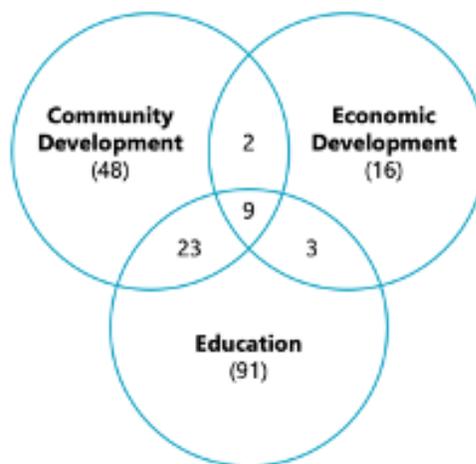
<sup>18</sup> The Hunt Institute: [How States are Using Federal Relief Dollars for K-12 Education](#)

- **Delaware:** Access to credentialed programs and apprenticeships in an online format for every user in Delaware.
- **Tennessee:** Funded the Innovative High School Models grant program, intended to empower local communities and collaborate to boost student readiness and prepare students for a bright future in high-demand jobs in their region.
- **Tennessee:** Contracts with nonprofits to support career development, job training for at-risk students, career awareness and outreach in rural communities.
- **Vermont:** Grant program for secondary CTE institutions in the state (i.e., independent schools, comprehensive high schools, regional CTE centers, and adult CTE programs) to get reimbursed for costs associated with addressing the COVID-19 challenges.

## Philanthropic Support

The [Nebraska Foundation Resource Directory](#) was updated in 2019 and serves as a guide to grants for Nebraska children, youth, families and communities. Three relevant fields of interest that are designated as part of this report are community development, economic development and education. There are 48 organizations identified that support community development, 16 that support economic development and 91 that support education. Illustrated in the graphic below are the organizations that designated multiple fields of interest – there are nine that indicated support for all three areas, 23 that overlapped community development and education, three that overlapped economic development and education and two that overlapped community and economic development. This resource, compiled and maintained by the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, provides additional information (website, contact, application details) for each foundation listed. This could serve a good resource to leverage when identifying state-wide and regional grant opportunities to support further implementation of WBL initiatives.

**Nebraska Foundations (number) supporting three relevant fields of interest:**



There are national and state-focused foundations that support economic development and more specifically, career readiness and workforce development. They typically support these areas in the form of grants for specific programs or projects over a one-to-three-year period and can typically support initiatives by providing guidance

on best practices or connections to other grantees. Listed below are a few of the foundations/funds that have made investments in workforce development and career readiness.

Foundation/Fund	Relevant Focus Area	Investment Example
Charles Stewart Moss Foundation	Education – Expanding quality college and career readiness programming within the afterschool infrastructure; advancing innovations of national and state-level orgs working to incorporate and embed innovated strategies and practices into relevant networks that serve young people	<i>Nebraska Children and Families Foundation Afterschool College &amp; Career Readiness initiative (\$120k)</i>
ECMC Foundation	Career Readiness, including building the capacity of institutions and organizations to provide accredited, credit-bearing, industry-informed and transferable postsecondary CTE pathways	<i>Jobs for the Future (JFF) develops innovative career pathways, educational resources and public policies that increase college readiness and career success. (\$950k)</i>
Paul M. Angell Family Foundation	Social Causes – Education – Preparing Youth for Post-Secondary Success (access to and persistence in college, technical training)	<i>Expansion of Aurora Public Schools College and Career Centers (\$150k)</i>
Woods Charitable Fund	Education – college and career readiness	<i>Lincoln Public Schools – The Career Academy supporting a summer career focused program for 9<sup>th</sup> graders (\$30k)</i>
Kiewit Companies Foundation	Youth Pathways to Success, Cradle to Career alignment; Economic Growth & Opportunity – expand opportunities for low-income individuals and families to achieve greater economic success	<i>Metropolitan Community College Foundation – Support vocational scholarships (\$150k)</i>
Sherwood Foundation	Urban Community Partnerships, Greater Nebraska Initiatives	<i>Metropolitan Community College Foundation – college and career readiness (\$505k)</i>
Iowa West Foundation	Serves eastern Nebraska and southwest Iowa; Economic development – promotes job readiness and workforce training/preparedness	<i>Creating Career Pathways for High School Students in Southwest Iowa (\$308k)</i>
Aksarben Foundation	Workforce Development (Career Path Awareness and Career Development)	<i>Nebraska Tech Collaborative; Central Nebraska Workforce Initiative</i>

Within Nebraska, there are also many local community foundations that serve as giving collectives to connect philanthropists with the people making an impact in local communities. Each community foundation offers a variety of funding streams for its local community based on specific needs. Community foundations include:

- Omaha Community Foundation
- Kearney Area Community Foundation
- Fremont Area Community Foundation
- Phelps County Community Foundation
- Lexington Community Foundation
- Hastings Community Foundation
- Mid-Nebraska Community Foundation
- Hamilton Community Foundation
- Oregon Trail Community Foundation
- Lincoln Community Foundation

### Looking Forward: The National Fund for Workforce Solutions

A key to successfully scaling WBL and workforce development initiatives is cultivating and building the connections between various groups within states and communities – examples include investing employers in strengthening school-based programming, connecting philanthropic and nonprofit to focus their giving for increased impact, engaging government in decision making as a way to advocate for funding and policy needs, etc. [The National Fund for Workforce Solutions](#) invests in a network of communities taking a demand-driven, evidence-based approach to workforce development. Listed below are examples of regional collaboratives that bring together groups of funders, government, educators, employers and training providers in different ways.

<p><b>Georgia.</b> Managed by the United Way of Greater Atlanta, <a href="#">CareerRise</a> works with local employers, educators, and philanthropy and nonprofit partners to strengthen its partnerships, develop common solutions to the region’s labor issues, and collectively invest in Atlanta’s workforce.</p>	<p><b>Iowa.</b> <a href="#">Central Iowa Works</a>, an initiative of the United Way of Central Iowa, seeks to close central Iowa’s skills gap and meet the needs of employers by helping businesses recruit and hire qualified workers.</p>
<p><b>Kansas.</b> <a href="#">PACES</a> (Preparation for Advanced Career Employment System) works to prepare central Kansas’s manufacturing and aviation workforce by investing in high demand skills and working with local employers to prepare individuals for work in manufacturing, aviation and health care.</p>	<p><b>Massachusetts.</b> <a href="#">SkillWorks</a> works to improve workforce development in Boston and in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The collaborative brings together philanthropy, government, community organizations, and employers to address the twin goals of helping low-income individuals attain family-supporting jobs and helping businesses find skilled workers.</p>
<p><b>Ohio.</b> The <a href="#">Fund for Our Economic Future</a> is an alliance of funders dedicated to advancing economic growth and equitable access to opportunity for the people of Northeast Ohio by articulating and advancing a regional agenda, empowering a leadership network and marshaling strategic funding.</p>	<p><b>Texas.</b> <a href="#">Pathways to Work</a> is a partnership of funders, employers, and training providers working together to equip frontline workers with skills needed for middle-skill jobs in targeted industry sectors.</p>
<p><b>Virginia.</b> The <a href="#">Dan River Region Collaborative</a> addresses workforce development in the Dan River Region of Virginia. Utilizing a sector strategy approach, the DRRC promotes regional partnerships of employers, educators, workforce developers and other stakeholders to address the skills needs of regional employers.</p>	

# Recommendations

- Build on current strengths in the state's college and career readiness standards and definition of WBL and focus on meeting stakeholder implementation needs with increased communications, messaging, and branding of WBL opportunities.
- To expand both student awareness and ease of tracking participation, add a "with WBL" descriptor to courses.
- To provide more equitable access to WBL opportunities and high-quality implementation, explore the feasibility of creating Regional WBL Coordinator positions serving all communities in the state.
- Consider building other public agency partnerships; for example, with state Workforce Development and Economic Development agencies, as well as the Community College System.
- Expand data reporting strategies to increase transparency and action around equitable access and participation.

### Recommendation 1:

Build on current strengths in the state's college and career readiness standards and definition of WBL and **focus on meeting stakeholder implementation needs with increased communications, messaging, and branding of WBL opportunities**. Stakeholders are not always aware of existing resources to support implementation, and potential employers may not fully understand the purpose and benefits of WBL. For example, one CTE Teacher coordinating WBL for the first time described creating an employer WBL from scratch. Investing in additional resources, and trainings on accessing and utilizing these resources, could benefit all stakeholders by streamlining the efforts required to manage WBL programs.

### Recommendation 2:

**To expand both student awareness and ease of tracking participation, add a "with WBL" descriptor to courses**, within CTE and beyond. Districts and schools will require support and resources to understand this new designation, how to advise students on enrolling in appropriate courses, and how to monitor progress towards course expectations. Further, adjusting course titles will also require updates to data management systems to ensure accurate tracking of participation, required for Perkins reporting. Finally, adding a formal WBL designation to individual courses will likely create needs for codifying approaches to assessing successful completion of course requirements in order to award credit to students.

### Recommendation 3:

**To provide more equitable access to WBL opportunities, explore the feasibility of creating Regional WBL Coordinator positions serving all communities in the state.** While sustainable funding is an important consideration, evidence suggests that WBL coordinators are gatekeepers to opportunity, and capacity dedicated to coordination can expand access. Dedicated coordinators may also help alleviate interruptions to WBL created when teachers or administrators frequently transition roles, and coordination passes to another school-based staff member.

### Recommendation 4:

**Consider other public agency partnerships (for example, with state Workforce Development and Economic Development agencies, as well as the Community College System)** to support access, funding, implementation, and identification of new employer partners. Models from other states, such as Iowa's intermediary model, may offer a blueprint for designing and funding and strong partnership-based approach.

### Recommendation 5:

**Expand data reporting strategies** to increase access to reports and dashboards. Adopt a set of guiding principles such that new reports are publicly available, transparent, and focused on identifying and addressing equity gaps in participation of all students in all parts of the state in high-quality, classroom-connected WBL opportunities.

### Funding Strategies

In the short-term, consider options for utilizing time-limited funding sources such as GEER, ESSER, or HEERF to implement recommendations such as expanded data tracking and reporting, or additional marketing and branding resources to increase awareness of WBL resources and opportunities.

To position these changes for longer-term sustainability, consider opportunities for pilot or demonstration programs that may be kick-started by time-limited funds in order to establish evidence of effectiveness. For example, while implementing a statewide regional coordinator program is not without significant costs, piloting in a limited number of underserved, likely rural, regions could generate a set of proof points to demonstrate impact and build the case for longer-term investments.

### Conclusion

Throughout this partnership, TNTP has engaged with students, educators, and state leaders across Nebraska and identified several assets. Nebraska's College and Career Readiness standards are particularly comprehensive and have been internalized by educators we interviewed as the purpose of their work. The state's definition of WBL compares favorably to definitions in other states because of its student-centered language, grounded in defined stakeholders and a clear purpose behind the activities. Nebraska offers more WBL pathways than comparison states and prepares students for these "capstone" experiences with a clearly articulated workplace experience continuum spanning grade levels.

Even with these assets, the state is committed to a vision of expanded opportunity to WBL to ensure equitable access to the many benefits of this educational approach. To achieve this vision, Nebraska may consider adopting practices evident in other states. Specifically, considering the addition of a formal Regional WBL Coordinator role, increased communication around implementation resources, additional data tracking and transparency about participation across student subgroups, and strengthened partnerships with other agencies may all improve student knowledge of and access to the multitude of high-quality WBL experiences in the state. Pursuing any of these potential changes requires taking a critical look at long-term sustainability, so the state may consider utilizing new funding sources, such as the American Rescue Plan, to conduct demonstration projects designed to test new approaches and demonstrate their value in supporting expanded, equitable access to WBL. With better tracking of data on WBL participation, the state would be positioned not only to meet Perkins reporting requirements, but also to assess the effectiveness of these new approaches in order to make decisions about wider adoption of promising strategies.

## Appendix I: Methodology

To provide a snapshot of the current approach to WBL, as well as an overview of potential alternative approach from other states, TNTP focused data collection, stakeholder engagement, and analysis around three major questions:

1. **Cross-state comparisons:** How do other states define WBL and reflect expectations in standards and frameworks? How might these approaches inform Nebraska’s revisions?
2. **Stakeholder experiences:** How do stakeholders (students, families, educators, employers) perceive the current state of WBL in Nebraska? Are there gaps in equitable access to WBL programming for specific groups of Nebraska? What do stakeholder envision for the future?
3. **Funding approaches:** How do states utilize various funding streams to support WBL?

### Comparative Data

The cross-state comparative data collected included reviews of state department of education websites to identify definitions of WBL, academic standards referencing WBL, relevant technical knowledge and skills, relevant career readiness skills (including personal and social skills), and WBL implementation resources (including WBL manuals, user guides, and frameworks). Further, we reviewed reports on these same topics produced by national organizations with a career and technical education and/or WBL focus (for example, the Association of Career and Technical Education). We used qualitative content analysis to distill key themes and trends, and to reflect similarities and difference between Nebraska’s approach and that of comparison states.

Additionally, we reviewed state department of education websites, online guides to philanthropic organizations, and research/policy reports outlining current approaches to and trends within funding career and technical education and WBL.

### Focus Groups and Surveys

TNTP conducted focus groups with educators and surveys with [educators](#) and [students](#). Survey instruments and [focus group protocols](#) covered key themes:

- How is WBL defined?
- How do stakeholders currently experience WBL?
- Who is able to participate in WBL? How do they learn about opportunities and next steps? How is course credit assigned?
- What are barriers to participating in WBL? What are suggestions for overcoming those barriers?

These themes, and more detailed questions within each theme, were modified as appropriate for specific stakeholder groups.

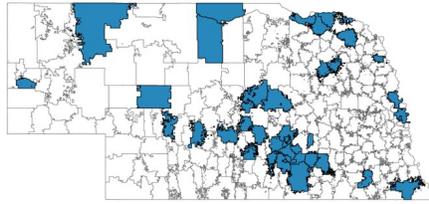
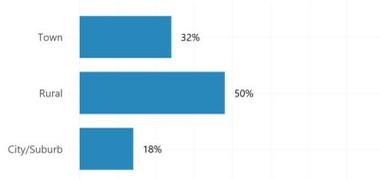
## EDUCATOR RESPONSES

**127** responses from 48+ districts

**94%** identified as white

**76%** teach all four HS grades

Respondents came from a variety of geographic areas:



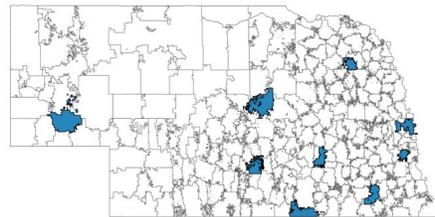
## STUDENT RESPONSES

**240** responses from 14+ districts

**68%** identified as white

**39%** were in 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade

Westside HS in Omaha accounted for 80% of the sample (56% of 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup>)



### Gaps in Data and Engagement

A survey was also distributed to statewide groups representing [community organizations](#) and [parent/family organizations](#), with only two community organization responses and no responses from parent/family organizations received.

## APPENDIX II: Work-based Learning Research and Reports

Resource	Link
Defining Quality: Student Career Development. (2019, June). Retrieved from <a href="https://www.acteonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/HQ_StudentCareerDevelopment_June2019.pdf">https://www.acteonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/HQ_StudentCareerDevelopment_June2019.pdf</a>	<a href="https://www.acteonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/HQ_StudentCareerDevelopment_June2019.pdf">https://www.acteonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/HQ_StudentCareerDevelopment_June2019.pdf</a> (Clicking link downloads report)
Employer Engagement. (2021). Retrieved from <a href="https://www.nga.org/futureworkforce/policies/employer-engagement/">https://www.nga.org/futureworkforce/policies/employer-engagement/</a>	<a href="http://blog.careertech.org/">http://blog.careertech.org/</a>
Statewide CTE and Workforce Development Updates (2021). Retrieved from <a href="http://blog.careertech.org/?tag=work-based-learning">http://blog.careertech.org/?tag=work-based-learning</a>	<a href="http://blog.careertech.org/?tag=work-based-learning">http://blog.careertech.org/?tag=work-based-learning</a>
The Western Governors' Workforce Development Initiative: The Chairman's Initiative of South Dakota Governor Dennis Daugaard. (2018, June). Retrieved from <a href="https://westgov.org/images/editor/FINAL_2018_Workforce_Report.pdf">https://westgov.org/images/editor/FINAL_2018_Workforce_Report.pdf</a>	<a href="https://westgov.org/images/editor/FINAL_2018_Workforce_Report.pdf">https://westgov.org/images/editor/FINAL_2018_Workforce_Report.pdf</a> (Clicking link downloads report)
Working to Learn and Learning to Work: A State-by-State Analysis of High School Work-based Learning Policies. (2021, March 10). Retrieved from <a href="https://bellwethereducation.org/publication/working-learn-and-learning-work-state-state-analysis-high-school-work-based-learning">https://bellwethereducation.org/publication/working-learn-and-learning-work-state-state-analysis-high-school-work-based-learning</a>	<a href="https://bellwethereducation.org/publication/working-learn-and-learning-work-state-state-analysis-high-school-work-based-learning">https://bellwethereducation.org/publication/working-learn-and-learning-work-state-state-analysis-high-school-work-based-learning</a>
High-Quality CTE During COVID-19: Leveraging Federal Relief Funds at the Local Level. (2021, May 13). Retrieved from <a href="https://www.acteonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/HighQualityCTE_COVIDFunding_May2021_Final2.pdf">https://www.acteonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/HighQualityCTE_COVIDFunding_May2021_Final2.pdf</a>	<a href="https://www.acteonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/HighQualityCTE_COVIDFunding_May2021_Final2.pdf">https://www.acteonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/HighQualityCTE_COVIDFunding_May2021_Final2.pdf</a> (Clicking link downloads report)
Spiker, K. (2019, January). Partnering Up How industry partnerships can bring work-based learning to scale. Retrieved from <a href="http://tawb.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Partnering-Up-Brief-FIN-LOW-RES.pdf">http://tawb.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Partnering-Up-Brief-FIN-LOW-RES.pdf</a>	<a href="http://tawb.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Partnering-Up-Brief-FIN-LOW-RES.pdf">http://tawb.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Partnering-Up-Brief-FIN-LOW-RES.pdf</a> (Clicking link downloads report)
Making Sense of Credentials: A State Roadmap and Action Guide for Transparency. (2020, November). Retrieved from <a href="https://credentialengine.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/State-Roadmap-and-Action-Guide.pdf">https://credentialengine.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/State-Roadmap-and-Action-Guide.pdf</a>	<a href="https://credentialengine.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/State-Roadmap-and-Action-Guide.pdf">https://credentialengine.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/State-Roadmap-and-Action-Guide.pdf</a> (Clicking link downloads report)
Using Universal Design for Learning in Apprenticeship. (2020, September). Retrieved from <a href="https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ODEP/pdf/UsingUniversalDesignforLearninginApprenticeship.pdf">https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ODEP/pdf/UsingUniversalDesignforLearninginApprenticeship.pdf</a>	<a href="https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ODEP/pdf/UsingUniversalDesignforLearninginApprenticeship.pdf">https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ODEP/pdf/UsingUniversalDesignforLearninginApprenticeship.pdf</a> (Clicking link downloads report)
Policy Academy On Scaling Work-Based Learning. (2021). Retrieved from <a href="https://www.nga.org/work-based-learning/">https://www.nga.org/work-based-learning/</a>	<a href="https://www.nga.org/work-based-learning/">https://www.nga.org/work-based-learning/</a>

Hauge, K. (2021, January 30). States Continue Advancing Strategies to Scale Work-Based Learning. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.nga.org/center/publications/states-continue-advancing-strategies-to-scale-work-based-learning/">https://www.nga.org/center/publications/states-continue-advancing-strategies-to-scale-work-based-learning/</a>	<a href="https://www.nga.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/0118_States-Continue-Advancing-Strategies-to-Scale-Work-Based-Learning.pdf">https://www.nga.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/0118_States-Continue-Advancing-Strategies-to-Scale-Work-Based-Learning.pdf</a> (Clicking link downloads report)
Components of Comprehensive Work-based Learning (WBL) Programs. (n.d.). Retrieved from <a href="https://cte.ed.gov/wbltoolkit/index.html">https://cte.ed.gov/wbltoolkit/index.html</a>	<a href="https://cte.ed.gov/wbltoolkit/index.html">https://cte.ed.gov/wbltoolkit/index.html</a>
Seleznow, E. M., Kobes, D. M., Messing-Mathie, A. M., & Sullivan, M. M. (2021). Center for Apprenticeship & Work-Based Learning. Retrieved from <a href="https://www.jff.org/what-we-do/impact-stories/center-for-apprenticeship-and-work-based-learning/">https://www.jff.org/what-we-do/impact-stories/center-for-apprenticeship-and-work-based-learning/</a>	<a href="https://www.jff.org/what-we-do/impact-stories/center-for-apprenticeship-and-work-based-learning/">https://www.jff.org/what-we-do/impact-stories/center-for-apprenticeship-and-work-based-learning/</a>

## APPENDIX III: State-specific Resources and Guides

State	Resource Description	Link
Colorado	Colorado Department of Education	<a href="https://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/workbasedlearning">https://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/workbasedlearning</a>
Georgia	State Department of Education Department of Work-Based Learning Website	<a href="https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/CTAE/Pages/Work-Based-Learning-.aspx">https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/CTAE/Pages/Work-Based-Learning-.aspx</a>
	Georgia Work-Based Learning Website	<a href="https://gawbl.org/">https://gawbl.org/</a>
Indiana	Office of Workbased Learning and Apprenticeship	<a href="https://www.in.gov/dwd/career-training-adult-ed/work-based-learning-and-apprenticeship/">https://www.in.gov/dwd/career-training-adult-ed/work-based-learning-and-apprenticeship/</a>
	Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) Work-Based Learning Manual	<a href="https://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/wf-stem/indiana-k-12-work-based-learning-manual-final.pdf">https://www.doe.in.gov/sites/default/files/wf-stem/indiana-k-12-work-based-learning-manual-final.pdf</a> (Clicking link downloads report)
Iowa	Iowa Intermediary Network	<a href="https://www.iowain.org/">https://www.iowain.org/</a>
	Iowa Clearinghouse of Work-Based Learning	<a href="https://clearinghouse.futurereadyiowa.gov/">https://clearinghouse.futurereadyiowa.gov/</a>
Kansas	Kansas State Department of Education Work-Based Learning Guidance Document	<a href="https://www.ksde.org/Portals/0/CSAS/CSAS%20Home/CTE%20Home/Kansas%20Work-Based%20Learning_Personalized%20Learning%20Plan.pdf">https://www.ksde.org/Portals/0/CSAS/CSAS%20Home/CTE%20Home/Kansas%20Work-Based%20Learning_Personalized%20Learning%20Plan.pdf</a> (Clicking link downloads report)
Massachusetts	Skills Library: A Landing Page for Work-Based Learning Programs and Resources	<a href="https://www.skillslibrary.com/wbl.htm">https://www.skillslibrary.com/wbl.htm</a>
Missouri	Department of Elementary and Secondary Education	<a href="https://dese.mo.gov/college-career-readiness/career-education">https://dese.mo.gov/college-career-readiness/career-education</a>
Ohio	State Department of Education Work-Based Learning Site	<a href="http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Career-Tech/Career-Connections/Work-Based-Learning">http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Career-Tech/Career-Connections/Work-Based-Learning</a>
Tennessee	Tennessee Department of Education	<a href="https://www.tn.gov/education/career-and-technical-education/work-based-learning.html">https://www.tn.gov/education/career-and-technical-education/work-based-learning.html</a>
	Drive to 55 Alliance	<a href="https://driveto55.org/">https://driveto55.org/</a>
Texas	Texas Education Agency CTE	<a href="https://www.txcte.org/work-based-learning">https://www.txcte.org/work-based-learning</a>

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Virginia

Virginia Department of  
Education (VDOE)

[https://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/career technical/work-based learning/index.shtml](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/career_technical/work-based_learning/index.shtml)

## APPENDIX IV: State-specific Definitions of WBL

State	Definition of WBL
Nebraska	<p><b>Work-Based Learning (WBL) strategies are a planned program of school-site and worksite experiences related to the career interest of the student learner that are designed to enable the student learner to acquire knowledge and skills in a real work setting. The benefits for the student learner, school district, and employer are evident as the student learner develops technical, academic, and career readiness skills while participating in meaningful engagement with employers in his/her area.</b></p>
Iowa	<p>Work-based learning programs are structured educational programs designed to utilize employer and community experiences to help students meet specific learning objectives.</p>
Tennessee	<p>WBL is a strategy to reinforce academic, technical and social skills through collaborative activities with industry. WBL experiences allow students to apply classroom theories to practical problems, to explore career options, and pursue personal and professional goals. Introductory WBL activities may include industry tours and classroom speakers. More advanced activities may include job shadows and industry-led, project-based learning. Ultimately, students may participate in capstone WBL experiences that include activities such as apprenticeships, internships, clinical experiences, and other practicum placements for credit.</p>
South Dakota	<p>Work-Based Learning (WBL) connects students with industry to engage in real-world experiences. WBL experiences bridge academic, technical and employability skill development to help students become college, career and life ready. Whether in the earlier grades with career awareness, middle grades with career exploration, or high school with career preparation, WBL helps students explore careers and develop personal and professional goals for life after high school.</p>
Indiana	<p>Work-Based Learning is a framework of various pathways, or solutions, which include practical experiences to help individuals gain an understanding of an occupation with on-the-job learning. It ranges from career awareness to career training.</p>
Ohio	<p>Work-based learning experiences are conducted at a work site during or after school. They are designed to provide authentic learning experiences to students that link academic, technical and professional skills. Business and education partners work together to evaluate and supervise the experience, which must be documented with learning agreements.</p>
Georgia	<p>Work-Based Learning Programs (WBL) is a continuum of awareness, exploration, preparation, and training activities, including developing employability and technical skills that support success in careers and postsecondary education. Structured learning and authentic work experiences are implemented through an education and industry partnership. Students have the opportunity to connect what they learn in school with worksite application, enabling a smooth transition into the work force and/or education beyond high school. WBL activities culminate in an assessment and recognition of acquired knowledge and skills</p>
Virginia	<p>High-Quality Work-Based Learning: comprised of school-coordinated workplace experiences that are related to students' career goals and/or interests, are integrated with instruction, and are performed in partnership with local businesses and organizations.</p>

Texas	<p>Work-Based Learning is a continuum of intentional activities and experiences designed to expand the boundaries of the classroom and prepare students for future career opportunities. Activities and experiences begin as early as pre-kindergarten and continue through postsecondary education.</p>
Colorado	<p>WBL is a continuum of activities that occur, in part or in whole, in the workplace, providing the learner with hands-on, real world experience.</p>
Kansas	<p>Work-Based Learning includes a continuum of awareness, exploration and preparation that combines an individual's career goals, structured learning and authentic work experiences implemented through a sustained partnership with Kansas business/industry. WBL activities with industry or community professionals culminate in a validation and measurement of acquired knowledge, skills and possible employment.</p>
Wyoming	<p>Work-Based Learning Programs (WBL) is a continuum of awareness, exploration, preparation, and training activities, including developing employability and technical skills that support success in careers, military, and postsecondary education. Structured learning and authentic work experiences are implemented through an education and industry partnership. Students have the opportunity to connect what they learn in school with worksite application, enabling a smooth transition into the work force and/or education beyond high school. Work-Based Learning activities culminate in an assessment and recognition of acquired knowledge and skills.</p>