

INFORMATION BRIEF

Work-Based Learning

NEW SKILLS FOR YOUTH

"Without application, principles and ideas have no bearing and no test." - John Dewey

What's the Issue?

In order for students to understand the expectations and skills needed for the workplace, opportunities for real-time experience through job shadowing, apprenticeships, internships, or mentorships are critical.

So...What is Work-Based Learning?

Work-based learning enables participants to gain or enhance their skills while employed or while engaged in an experience that is similar to employment. Examples include: workplace simulations, career academies, school-based enterprises, on-the-job-training, job shadowing, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeships, internships and paid or unpaid work experiences.

A continuum of work-based learning can exist from Kindergarten through adulthood. The stages of work-based learning can be described as:

- Learning About Work
- Learning Through Work
- Learning For Work

Career Awareness and Exploration experiences support Learning About Work. Career Preparation Experiences support Learning Through Work. Career Training experiences support Learning For Work, that is, preparation for a specific range of occupations.

Why It Matters

Through work-based learning students have the opportunity to see how classroom instruction connects to the world of work and future career opportunities.

Student benefits:

- Application of classroom learning in a real world setting
- Participation in authentic, job related tasks
- Understanding the expectations of the work experience
- Provides a clear connection with world of work
- Provides improved opportunities for post-secondary careers

What are the Challenges?

Work-based Learning provides relevant experience for students in areas of interest. Schools face scheduling and transportation challenges.



Recommended Actions You Can Take

Like many Career Pathways initiatives across the state of Oklahoma, there are “pockets of success” in which districts are already implementing innovative strategies. Oklahoma City Public Schools implemented the National Academy Foundation program which includes high school internship opportunities. Union Public Schools Career Connect program provides Service Learning and Internship opportunities. Hilldale Public Schools provides an internship program for high school seniors. Information and Elevate video may be found on the New Skills for Youth Webpage: <http://www.sde.ok.gov/sde/new-skills-classroom>

Oklahoma City Public Schools (OKCPS) Career Academies -

Building Oklahoma City's Workforce One Child at a Time

Career academies increase the engagement of high schools students and provide a way for those beyond the wall of the school to enhance students' educational experiences. National Academy Foundation (NAF) academies succeed with the investment of schools, students, businesses, and community leaders who believe young people deserve a high return on their education. OKCPS chose involvement with a NAF academy because we:

- Care about the quality of education and opportunities available to young people;
- Seek a meaningful connection with future generations of professionals; and
- Recognize that a high school diploma is not enough to assure a young person's success in college or in the workplace.

Schools, communities, and business can do more to help young people excel. All reap the rewards that come with fidelity to the Career Academy National Standards of Practice and the NAF model.

Union Public Schools' Career Connect program provides Service Learning Program including opportunities for internships.

Students can use 1-2 elective class periods a day to perform community service or unpaid job shadowing in the community. Union currently has students placed in dental offices, veterinarian hospitals, Union schools, and with numerous other business partners throughout the community. Under our Service Learning program, students leave campus two hours a day to receive specialized training. Union Public Schools currently has an Automotive Mechanic Internship with the City of Tulsa and a Manufacturing agreement with APSCO/BAMA/EPSCO LLC. This is an actual class which serves 6-15 students and in most cases will have credentials associated with it through Tulsa Tech, TCC, or special certification organizations. www.unionps.org/union-career-connect

Hilldale Public Schools Internship Program

This internship program began in January 2017 for high school seniors. Seniors work in an area of interest during the school day and receive elective credit. It is an educational opportunity to give students a brief taste of different jobs and work settings. Students complete academic work during their internship including a weekly journal and an end-of-the-year project. Students also receive reviews from their business supervisor.



Benefits of Internships

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Students

Students benefit from working and learning in a high-skill environment. They observe all aspects of the company's operations and discover how the knowledge they gain in high school is applied in the workplace.

Teachers

Teachers benefit from a better understanding of what business and industry expect. By observing student interns, teachers can adjust curricula and instruction to the needs of the work site. Educators and employers work together in preparing students for success in the workplace.

Schools

High schools benefit because they can assure students and parents that graduates will be well prepared for post-secondary education and promising career opportunities. Close ties with the local employers enable schools to connect youths with career opportunities in numerous fields.

Employers

Employers benefit from the strong, long-term relationships with local schools, which will produce qualified job candidates for the companies (following post-secondary education).

Other employer benefits:

- Obtain assistance with project needs
- Meet staffing needs
- Base permanent future hiring decisions on knowledge and observation of candidate's work
- Increase awareness of your organization to attract additional qualified full-time and internship candidates
- Provide opportunity to mentor students interested in career associated with employer's business needs

Communities

Communities benefit because students who intern with local companies remain local. Benefits for local communities include:

- Increase in local commerce
- Increase in home purchasing
- Increase in population
- Decrease in unemployment
- Increase in community engagement

