

If you are a CTE teacher, you are probably familiar with work-based learning (WBL). For those new to WBL or who want a little more explanation about the state and federal requirements, read on to learn more.

Oregon adopted work-based learning as the Program Quality Indicator for federal Perkins V accountability. These requirements were established to assess how effective each state is in achieving progress in career and technical education and to optimize the return on investment of federal funds in career and technical education.

## What is Work-based Learning (WBL)?

Work-based learning is structured learning in the workplace or simulated environment that provides opportunities for sustained interactions with industry or community professionals that foster in-depth, firsthand experience of the expectations and application of knowledge and skills required in a given career field.

Let's break down the terms that are central to this definition.

Sustained interactions are defined as prolonged or extended learning experiences. This means it must take place over a series of weeks or months. The exact number of hours is intentionally undefined to accommodate differences in districts, schools, sectors, and companies.

Types of first-hand experiences include clinical/internship/practicum, cooperative work experience, pre-apprenticeship, school-based enterprise, service learning, and workplace simulation.

The following definitions have been taken from the [Perkins V WBL Handbook](#). This handbook is a resource for anyone with a role or interest in supporting, teaching or designing Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways or other work-based learning experiences. The handbook is provided by the [Oregon Department of Education](#) (ODE) and the [Higher Education Coordinating Commission](#).

**Clinical/internship/practicum** is a structured work experience requiring students to demonstrate specific occupational skills necessary for entry-level employment. Students come away with the knowledge to make informed decisions about next steps in postsecondary career choices and training. Awarding academic credit is optional.

**Cooperative work experience** is a structured educational strategy, coordinated by an educational provider, placing students in a work-based learning experience directly related to their classroom studies. It must lead to academic credit. Each student should have theoretical knowledge and/or practical experience in a relevant major field of study prior to placement.

**Pre-apprenticeships** are Oregon State Apprenticeship and Training Council (OSATC) approved programs designed to prepare individuals from underrepresented or underserved

backgrounds to enter and succeed in a Registered Apprenticeship program. The program must have a documented partnership with at least one, if not more, registered apprenticeship committee(s) attesting that completers will meet the minimum entry requirements, gain consideration, and are prepared for success in the program as a preferred applicant.

**School-based enterprise experiences** are hands-on and virtual learning opportunities that provide practical learning experiences to reinforce classroom instruction. These are an extension of the classroom to be managed and operated by students. School-based enterprise experiences can take place in or out of school and must align with [labor market demand](#) and have business and industry mentorship.

**Service Learning** is a structured, sustained learning experience in organized community service projects that meet actual community needs. Experiences are linked to classroom learning outcomes and career-related knowledge and skills through a cycle of service and reflection. Students design service-learning projects collaboratively with community partners.

**Workplace simulation** is hands-on and virtual learning opportunities that provide practical learning experiences to reinforce classroom instruction. Students participate in a variety of real-world worksite activities and engage with business and industry to assist in understanding what it's like to work in the chosen career field. These experiences use a variety of technological tools and can take place in or out of school. They must align with labor market demand and have business and industry mentorship.

## Program & Reporting Requirements

All work-based learning experiences tied to a CTE program of study must include all of the following criteria:

- 1) Align with CTE program of study curriculum and instruction
- 2) Include sustained interaction with industry, business, or community professionals
- 3) Be offered in-person, virtually, or in a simulated workplace setting
- 4) Lead to earning of credit and/or outcome verification

Each school and district determines the experiences that meet this definition and the ways to verify outcomes. Options for these experiences could include portfolios, skill assessments or other specific and measurable learning outcomes.

Student participants are called CTE Concentrators. In order for CTE Concentrators to meet the reporting threshold, they must have taken two or more credits in a single CTE program of study. Of those two or more credits, at least one credit must be in intermediate or advanced level coursework. The WBL can happen over the course of the CTE Concentrator's entire high school career, and they must have graduated high school with a diploma or modified diploma.

The reporting requirements for the work-based learning performance indicator came into effect FY2020. Reporting occurs annually during mid-May–June. Despite these targets being adjusted to take COVID-19 into consideration, Linn and Benton County's performance level was 10.6% in

FY2020 compared to the statewide target of five percent. The performance level targets for FY2022 are 20%.

## Updates & Information

The [Perkins V WBL Handbook](#) is being updated with revisions anticipated by August 2022. Requirements will stay the same, while additional explanations will be added to increase understanding. ODE is doing other things to improve the usability of this information. For example, liability is an area of confusion for many. ODE is working with BOLI on educational webinars, as well as a summary of the information from the BOLI website that is easy to follow.

Where do teachers, administrators, parents and industry go to learn more?

[Perkins V WBL Handbook](#)

[Work-Based Learning Rubric](#) for designing equitable work-based learning experiences

[CTE Network](#) is composed of secondary administrators, CTE regional coordinators, community college deans, and dual credit coordinators, along with other related school, college, and state staff.