



INDIANA
DEPARTMENT of
EDUCATION

Work-Based Learning

Menu of Experiences

Indiana Department of Education

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Work-Based Learning Menu of Experiences

page 3

Purpose

page 3

Work-Based Learning Definition

page 3

Elements of the WBL Definition

page 4

Menu of WBL Experiences

page 7

Course Code List

page 13

Menu of Work-Based Learning Experiences

Purpose

This guide provides a summary of different types of work-based learning experiences (WBL) available to students aligned to Indiana's new diploma requirements and Honors Seals. It also includes additional guidance on the WBL definition approved within the diploma requirements to help stakeholders understand the key elements necessary for a WBL experience to count towards graduation requirements.

The information included in this menu of WBL options is meant to serve as an entry point for planning conversations as schools and communities work to implement Indiana's vision for rethinking high school. The menu is meant to help stakeholders from across a community, including students, parents, employers, teachers, counselors, administrators, and other supporting organizations, understand the multiple approaches to WBL that all align to the requirements of Indiana's new high school diploma and Honors and Honors Plus diploma seals.

Guidance has been developed in collaboration with the Commission for Higher Education's Career and Technical Education team. Questions regarding the information can be shared with cte@che.in.gov.

Work-Based Learning Definition

The Indiana State Board of Education approved the following definition of WBL as it relates to the requirements of Indiana's new high school diploma and Honors and Honors Plus diploma seals.

Work-based learning (WBL) is defined as **sustained interaction** between participants and **industry professionals** in **real or simulated workplace settings**. These experiences foster **authentic work experience** and develop knowledge, skills, and competencies. Experiences support participants in career exploration and readiness and are intentionally **aligned and evaluated with course and training competencies**. WBL requires a written **partnership agreement and plan** between the participant, parent or guardian, school, and employer partner.

Elements of Work-Based Learning Definition

The following table provides a detailed interpretation of the WBL definition in relation to the graduation requirements by breaking down the meaning of each underlined phrase from the final approved definition. **These criteria must all be met to count any individual or combination of WBL experiences for any of the Honors or Honors Plus diploma seals.**

Element	Meaning
Sustained Interactions	- Each experience totals at least 25 hours across a single placement. - A maximum of 3 experiences can be combined to meet the requirements of any Honors Diploma Seal. - May take place before, during, or after school; or, outside of the school year over the summer or other breaks. <i>Additional Considerations for career and technical education (CTE):</i> - To meet CTE requirements for a funded WBL course, experiences must be at least 75+ hours in a single placement (a single placement may include multiple rotations, but must be at a single employer. Either approach requires the use of a partnership agreement and plan where the skills are built throughout the experience). - WBL hours earned over the summer are not eligible to receive CTE funding.
Industry Professionals	- An industry professional is someone who is currently employed (part-time or full-time) within the industry and has specialized knowledge and skills in a particular job or field. These interactions can occur through direct supervision, design and review of relevant tasks and deliverables, and/or mentorship. - While retired industry professionals or educators who previously served in an industry provide important career coaching and mentorship capacity, neither would qualify as an industry professional under this definition.

Element	Meaning
Real or Simulated Workplace Settings	Real workplace settings consist of: • An on-site experience with an employer partner at a traditional place of work be it on-site or in the field. • When relevant to the industry, a remote work experience that mirrors remote work in the professional setting. For example, reviewing digital blueprints to determine cost of supplies and materials on a construction job. Simulated workplace settings consist of: • An experience done in an educational setting (at a school or career center) or a training facility that models a real workplace setting. • A remote work experience in an industry that does not traditionally operate in a remote setting, and/or where students are completing tasks outside of the professional context within which they would traditionally be completed. For example, diagnosing an HVAC issue based on recorded videos or descriptions of a problem vs. performing the diagnosis on-site with a trained technician. • All simulated workplace settings must model a real workplace setting, including: technology, tools, equipment, and job assignments.
Authentic Work Experience	• Direct interactions, supervision, or mentorship with industry professionals so a student is learning to adapt to the various expectations and “unwritten rules” of professional conduct. • Meaningful tasks that go beyond passive exposure, shadowing, or observations and reflect age-appropriate deliverables that are designed and evaluated by an industry professional.
Aligned and Evaluated with Course and Training Competencies	• The task or skills included in the partnership agreement must align to industry-recognized competencies, as agreed to by the industry professional or employer, that are considered necessary for success in the industry as a whole, not just a specific job. • The experience culminates in an assessment or portfolio of work developed throughout the placement aligned to the skills and competencies identified in the partnership agreement.

Element	Meaning
	The culminating assessment or portfolio is designed and evaluated by an industry professional and feedback is provided to the participant along with a determination of mastery for the identified skills. When possible, the assessment is aligned with the requirements to attain a credential of value. <i>Additional Considerations for CTE:</i> To meet CTE requirements or funded WBL courses, the skills must be aligned to either a career interest area and academic coursework (Career Exploration Internship 0530), or aligned with the student's CTE pathway.
Partnership Agreement and Training Plan	- Each experience requires a written partnership agreement and training plan between the participant, parent or guardian, school, employer partner(s), and/or intermediaries. - The plan must include: - A clear articulation of projected learning outcomes, assessments, and how/where this learning will occur (at work site, in structured learning component, etc.). - Identification of career pathways aligned with work experience, interests and demand. - Detailed description of terms and expectations of work experience, including duration, compensation, and participant expectations. - Detailed description of partner expectations and roles, including financial investments, supports provided, and staffing requirements.

Menu of WBL Experiences

This section provides an overview of various types of WBL experiences students can utilize to earn WBL hours. **Any experience listed below can count towards all diploma types/seals;** however, the tables provide a recommendation as to which seal(s) each WBL experiences best aligns.

- Any WBL experience must include all elements of the WBL definition outlined above for hours to qualify towards diploma seals.
- Students can complete multiple experiences (3 maximum) to fulfill the requirements for a Readiness Seal.** Hours from experiences can accumulate over the student's high school career. For example, a student could do 3 25-hour experiences to meet the required hours of WBL (75) within the Enrollment Honors Plus Seal.

School-Based Enterprise

A "school-based enterprise" (SBE) is a student-run business operation that operates within a school setting, allowing students to gain practical experience in entrepreneurship, management, marketing, and other business skills by creating and selling goods or services to the school community, essentially acting as a real-world learning laboratory to apply classroom knowledge.

Example(s): [Eagle Manufacturing – Brown County High School](#); [Bulldog Manufacturing - Orleans High School](#); [Creek Cattle company - Indian Creek High School](#); [Wolverine Enterprises LLC - White River Valley High School](#)

Base Diploma/ Grad Pathways	Enrollment Honors Plus Seal	Employment Honors Seal	Employment Honors Plus Seal
★	★	★	

Workplace Simulation

A workplace simulation occurs inside a school, career center, or training facility and mirrors a live workplace setting. It may include facilities, inputs, resources, and equipment provided by an employer or the school. Students should experience a range of positions within the simulated workplace to understand various aspects of the simulated business or production. A workplace simulation should include networking opportunities with industry professionals and interactions with paying customers or clients.

Example(s): [Commodore Manufacturing - Perry Central](#); [Toyota 4T Academy - Evansville](#); [New York Blower Welding Technology Pathway - LaPorte High School](#); [Ft. Wayne Career Academy](#); [Link Program - Vanderburgh County School Corp.](#)

Base Diploma/ Grad Pathways	Enrollment Honors Plus Seal	Employment Honors Seal	Employment Honors Plus Seal
★	★	★	

Student Entrepreneurial Experience

An entrepreneurial student business is student-developed and -led, with support and mentorship from school staff and industry professionals. Outside sources may provide facilities, inputs, resources, and equipment in the business operation, which develops the skills and competencies necessary to succeed in business. Unlike SBEs, the student entrepreneur is the primary administrator for a business, such as a laptop repair service, a lawn maintenance enterprise, a coffee cart, a handmade greeting card operation, or a graphic/printing service.

Example(s): [RISE Program](#); Participating in an entrepreneurship contest, such as [Innovate WithIN](#)

Base Diploma/ Grad Pathways	Enrollment Honors Plus Seal	Employment Honors Seal	Employment Honors Plus Seal
★	★		

Micro-Internship

A micro-internship is a short-term internship that is a cross between job shadowing and a full-fledged internship. Each experience must be a minimum of 25 hours to meet the WBL definition. Micro-internships can be an ideal opportunity to explore a potential career area of interest or to utilize an available window of time (i.e. a two-week spring break) for a WBL experience.

Example(s): Project-based opportunities; Unpaid internship for two weeks to explore a career pathway

Base Diploma/ Grad Pathways	Enrollment Honors Plus Seal	Employment Honors Seal	Employment Honors Plus Seal
★	★		

Employability Skills Co-Op

An Employability Skills Co-op can be done through the Cooperative Education course (6162). Cooperative Education provides an opportunity for students to receive mentored on-the-job training combined with classroom instruction that focuses on employability and transition skills. Students do not have to be in an experience that aligns to their chosen pathway and do not have to be acquiring occupational specific skills. These experiences must be paid.

Example(s): A student has a part-time job and is enrolled in Cooperative Education (6162).

Base Diploma/ Grad Pathways	Enrollment Honors Plus Seal	Employment Honors Seal	Employment Honors Plus Seal
★	★		

Industry-Developed Team Challenge

An industry-developed team challenge is a type of experience done as part of Project-Based Learning (PBL). A typical challenge would consist of a local company presenting a challenge to a class or group of students based on a real-life problem the company has solved or is trying to solve and requests students develop a solution. Student solutions are evaluated by industry professionals at the conclusion of the project. Students participating in Career and Technical Student Organizations may have the opportunity to participate in these experiences through regional, state, or national competitions.

Example(s): [CTSO](#) competitions, such as [FFA Career Development Events](#); [PTECH - Logansport HS](#).

Base Diploma/ Grad Pathways	Enrollment Honors Plus Seal	Employment Honors Seal	Employment Honors Plus Seal
★	★		

Academic Internship

An internship that integrates academic learning with practical application in a professional setting. Academic internships are ideal for students that are not in a CTE pathway, but who have identified a career area of interest and taken applicable coursework in that area. For example, a student has identified a desire to work in the healthcare industry and has taken relevant science courses before securing an internship at a hospital. Academic internships can be categorized under the 0530 course code, provided all course requirements are met.

Example(s): Career Exploration Internship (0530); Internships in professional fields (business, healthcare, etc.)

Base Diploma/ Grad Pathways	Enrollment Honors Plus Seal	Employment Honors Seal	Employment Honors Plus Seal
★	★		

Technical Internship

An internship experience aligned to a student's CTE pathway. It may take the form of a stand-alone WBL experience or be embedded inside a course within a CTE pathway. An embedded experience is one that meets the requirements for a CTE course the student is enrolled in and generally takes place during allotted class time. Generally, technical internships serve as a capstone experience to apply classroom learning.

Example(s): WBL Capstone (5974); [NLPS Capstone Courses](#); Clinicals/Practicums embedded within a healthcare CTE pathway, [IU Healthcare Program - Crispus Attucks High School](#); [eT.E.A.L. Capstone - Greater Lafayette Career Academy](#)

Base Diploma/ Grad Pathways	Enrollment Honors Plus Seal	Employment Honors Seal	Employment Honors Plus Seal
★	★	★	

Modern Youth Apprenticeship

A structured WBL program defined by the state that integrates school-based and work-based learning through an aligned, competency based education and training plan. These programs require at least 650 hours of on-the-job experience. Experiences must be paid and the student must have the opportunity to earn postsecondary credit. The full definition of a Modern Youth Apprenticeship in Indiana code can be [found here](#).

Example(s): Regional Opportunity Initiatives (ROI) [UpSkill Work and Learn Program](#); EmployIndy [Modern Apprenticeship](#); [Prosser/Baptist Health Floyd Hospital - New Albany High School](#)

Base Diploma/ Grad Pathways	Enrollment Honors Plus Seal	Employment Honors Seal	Employment Honors Plus Seal
	★	★	★

Pre-Apprenticeship

Pre-apprenticeship is a specific type of youth apprenticeship opportunity that is articulated to a registered apprenticeship program (RAP). These programs integrate real-world, hands-on training with classroom instruction that is directly aligned with an active RAP, providing a clear, structured pathway to apprenticeship success. Pre-Apprenticeship programs may be eligible for additional funding if certified by the [Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeships](#).

Example(s): [IKORCC Construction](#); additional examples can be found [here](#)

Base Diploma/ Grad Pathways	Enrollment Honors Plus Seal	Employment Honors Seal	Employment Honors Plus Seal
	★	★	★

DOL Registered Apprenticeship Programs

Registered Apprenticeship is a structured talent development strategy that combines on-the-job learning, classroom learning, and mentorship to train individuals to be experts in their field. Programs are approved by the U.S. Department of Labor (U.S. DOL) and some programs allow high school students as early as age 16 to participate and complete registered programs.

Example(s): Resources on Registered Apprenticeship can be found [here](#) or [here](#).

Base Diploma/ Grad Pathways	Enrollment Honors Plus Seal	Employment Honors Seal	Employment Honors Plus Seal
	★	★	★

Course Code List

The table below provides the most common course codes for reporting WBL experiences. Secondary WBL hours are reported in Indiana's CTE data collection system, InTERS. WBL hours and other information should be reported for both CTE students and non-CTE students. Reporting information within InTERS allows students to receive credit for their WBL hours and schools to receive funding (where applicable).

All WBL hours for existing funded course codes are in 75-hour increments for each credit. WBL hours that are less than 75 hours can be reported utilizing the 0543 course code. **Additional guidance on WBL reporting will be shared by the Commission's CTE team through their August newsletter.** This will include additional details on the 0543 option, specific examples of reporting different student scenarios, and the information necessary to report a student's WBL experience in InTERS. Questions specific to WBL reporting can be shared with CTE@che.in.gov.

Code	Name	Pre-reqs	Credits	Funding
CTE Capstone Courses*	Program Specific Capstone	See NLPS Review Document or Course Titles and Descriptions	2-semester course, 2 semesters required. 1-3 credits per semester, 6 credits maximum	\$300-\$1,071
0530	Career Exploration Internship	None	1-3 credits per semester; 6 credits max	\$500
0543	WBL Lvl 1: Employability Skills Development	None	None, each 75-hour increment will be eligible for 1 credit of a personalized elective	\$0
5974	Work-Based Learning Capstone	Complete at least one advanced CTE course from a program or program of study	1 semester course, 1-3 credits per semester; 6 credits max.	\$500
6148	Registered Apprenticeship	Dependent on program requirements	1 semester course, may be taken for successive semesters; 12 credits max	\$500

6149	Youth Apprenticeship	None	1 semester course, may be taken for successive semesters; 12 credits max	\$500
6162	Co-operative Education	None	1 semester course, 1-3 credits per semester; 6 credits max.	\$150
7156	Technical Skills Development	Concurrently enrolled in a NLPS Concentrator A and/or B course	2 semester course, 2 semesters required, 1 credit per semester. 2 credits max per program of study.	\$300

*CTE programs of study include program-specific capstone courses. See [NLPS Review Document](#) and [2025-2026 funding memo](#) for information on prerequisites, course funding levels, and additional details.