



WORK-BASED LEARNING

Model Policy

ExcelinEd Policy Toolkit - 2020

This document contains a model policy to establish a cross-sector vision, leadership and ongoing program quality evaluation of a statewide K-16 work-based learning (WBL) program.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this model policy is to support the development and implementation of a high-quality work-based learning continuum that is accessible to all students. [Download this model policy as an editable Microsoft Word document.](#)

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is recommended that this policy be accompanied by the following policies to ensure the state's work-based learning approach supports the goals of the state's education-to-workforce system:

- [Annual Review of CTE Offerings](#)
- [Building Cross-Sector Partnerships](#)
- [College and Career Pathways Innovation Act](#)
- [Taxpayer Credit for Hiring K-12 Students as Interns or Apprentices](#)

MODEL POLICY – WORK-BASED LEARNING

Be it Enacted by the Legislature of the (state):

Section 1: [Definitions]

- A. As used in this section the terms have the following meanings:
- a. "Agency-specific strategic plan" means a strategic plan developed by a single agency or entity to drive their agency priorities in support of the state's broader goals.
 - b. "Annual Review of CTE Offerings" means the process established by (ref. state law/policy) that:
 - i. ensures proper alignment of CTE programs with workforce demand;
 - ii. emphasizes the type of CTE programs that will help students learn the skills needed for middle- and high-wage careers; and
 - iii. informs the public how CTE programs are delivering on the federal, state and local investments to produce the skilled workforce needed for economic growth.
 - c. "CTE" means Career and Technical Education, as defined in (ref. law/policy).
 - d. "K-16" means spanning grades K-12 and postsecondary education.
 - e. "Postsecondary" means all formal education institutions and programs leading to bachelor's degrees, associate's degrees, industry-valued certificates and diplomas, or other sub-bachelors/sub-associates licenses and credentials.
 - f. "Priority industry sectors and occupations" means (insert state definition/list/reference to law/policy that identifies mid/high-skill, mid/high-wage, in-demand occupations).
 - g. "Program Quality Indicator" means a measure or set of measures that serves as a quality threshold or benchmark for a priority aspect of the state's WBL program.
 - h. "Work-Based Learning Continuum" means a progressive series of student engagements with work-placed learning that become more complex as a student moves through elementary, secondary and postsecondary education. Types of experiences along a work-based learning continuum include, but are not limited to:
 - i. "Career Exploration" means WBL experiences that build awareness of careers. Career exploration experiences can include career fairs, industry-led projects and mock interviews.



- ii. “Career Exposure” means WBL experiences whereby students engage with a workplace to learn information about a specific industry or occupation. Career exposure experiences can include job shadowing, mentoring, or informational interviews.
- iii. “Career Immersion” means WBL experiences that provide extended, supervised opportunities to demonstrate mastery of work readiness skills. Career immersion experiences can include work-based learning capstone courses, apprenticeships, internships, service learning and on-the-job training.
- i. “Work-Based Learning Coordinator” means teacher, faculty member, learning support professional or other appropriately trained and licensed person who oversees student WBL experiences, as defined in *(ref. law/policy)*.
- j. “Work-Based Learning Leadership Council” means the entity directed under this act to provide leadership, strategic direction and evaluation of the state’s investments in, and progress toward, implementing a high-quality, K-16 Work-Based Learning program that is accessible to all students and improves the career readiness of the state’s workforce.
- k. “Work-Based Learning Experience” means an individual activity, classroom-based lesson or experience within the WBL Continuum that, through employer engagement, allows students to develop awareness and specific knowledge and skills in an industry or occupation.
- l. “WBL Program Quality Evaluation” means the process by which the WBL Leadership Council regularly evaluates the state’s WBL program, implementation and outcomes based on program quality indicators and established performance measures. The findings of this evaluation are used to inform the development and revision of the WBL Strategic Plan.
- m. “WBL Strategic Plan” means the plan and supporting documentation that outline the goals, measurable objectives, action steps and recommendations the WBL Council will use to implement the state’s vision for WBL.

Section 2: [(State) Work-Based Learning Leadership Council]

Note: If the state is establishing a new cross-sector council to oversee the state’s work-based learning, delete section (2.D). If the state is directing an existing entity to fulfil the roles and responsibilities of the WBL Leadership Council- delete sections 2.A-C and replace “WBL Leadership Council” with that entity name throughout the model policy.

- A. The (State) Work-Based Learning Leadership Council (WBL Leadership Council) is hereby established and directed to provide leadership, strategic direction and evaluation of the state’s investments in, and progress toward, implementing a high-quality, K-16 Work-Based Learning program that is accessible to all students and improves the career readiness of the state’s workforce.
- B. The WBL Leadership Council shall be chaired by *(title, agency/entity)* and *(agency/title)* will provide administrative support.
- C. *(Customize membership for specific state context and stakeholders.)* The WBL Leadership Council shall include members from the following stakeholder groups, who reflect *(state’s)* diversity in terms of geography, priority industry sectors, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability and other appropriate special populations. These representatives shall be appointed by *(appointer name)* for rotating 3-year terms.
 - a. Heads, or designees, of state agencies, such as education, labor/workforce and higher education
 - b. Cross-sector employers/industry associations/chambers of commerce
 - c. Regional economic development and workforce investment boards
 - d. Local government officials
 - e. Educators (K-12 and postsecondary)
 - f. Students (K-12 and postsecondary)
 - g. Parents (K-12 and postsecondary)
- D. *(optional, if selected delete 2.A-C)* The *(entity name)* is directed to provide leadership, strategic direction and evaluation of the state’s investments in, and progress toward, implementing a high-quality, K-16 Work-Based Learning program that is accessible to all students and improves the career readiness of the state’s workforce.
- E. The (WBL Leadership Council) collectively, and each (Council) member within the bounds of his/her authority and influence, shall:
 - a. Year 1
 - i. Conduct a statewide WBL program quality evaluation, requirements outlined in Section 3.



- ii. Create the state's work-based learning (WBL) vision, definitions, continuum and strategic plan, requirements outlined in Section 4, based on the results of the program quality evaluation.
 - b. Every subsequent 3 years
 - i. Conduct a statewide WBL program quality evaluation, requirements outlined in Section 3.
 - ii. Update the state's work-based learning (WBL) vision, definitions, continuum and strategic plan, requirements outlined in Section 4, based on the results of the program quality evaluation.
 - c. Ongoing
 - i. Develop, and annually report progress toward, the (*state*) WBL Strategic Plan.
 - ii. Align policy, guidance, initiatives, funding and communications with the state's WBL Strategic Plan.
 - iii. Actively seek engagement and feedback from all stakeholders involved with—and impacted by—work-based learning in the state.
 - iv. Lead and/or support implementation of all recommendations included in the WBL Strategic Plan.
 - v. Develop subcommittees to complete the work of the council, as appropriate.
 - vi. Meet at least two (2) times per year to evaluate progress toward implementation of the WBL Strategic Plan and identify interim action steps.

Section 3: [Ongoing Evaluation of Work-Based Learning Program Quality]

- A. The (WBL Leadership Council) shall develop a framework for and conduct a WBL program quality evaluation to analyze all currently available data related to WBL access, experiences, success and outcomes. The framework for the WBL program quality evaluation shall include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Goals for the WBL program quality evaluation.
 - b. An analysis of the extent to which the state's current WBL program meets the state's vision, goals and definition criteria for high-quality WBL along the state's WBL continuum (program achievement).
 - c. The development of WBL program quality indicators (PQIs) and a WBL PQI rubric that will be used to measure program achievement.
 - d. Current definitions of a high-quality WBL program, WBL continuum and individual experiences along the continuum.
 - e. An analysis of the state's current WBL landscape and barriers, including, but not limited to: state law and policies; K-12 and postsecondary policy alignment; and initiatives and funding streams impacting, or that have the potential to impact, WBL across agencies and employers.
 - f. An analysis of existing data related to student and employer WBL participation and outcomes to assess whether existing WBL data accurately represents and can measure progress towards the state's vision and goals for high-quality WBL that can be disaggregated by:
 - i. Type of WBL experience;
 - ii. Industry sector, occupation, career cluster and CTE program of study;
 - iii. Geography;
 - iv. Demographics (gender, race/ethnicity and socio-economic status) and special populations;
 - v. School, district, postsecondary institution and geographic region;
 - vi. Prior education achievement and experiences;
 - vii. Postsecondary enrollment, completion and degree/credential earned;
 - viii. Employment and wage earnings; and
 - ix. Other data elements identified by the WBL Leadership Council.
 - g. Identification of gaps where data elements and/or data systems are missing or insufficient for conducting a complete evaluation.
 - h. A stakeholder engagement process to collect qualitative data from all WBL stakeholders related to the accessibility, quality, equity and outcomes of WBL.
- B. The WBL Leadership Council shall complete a WBL program quality evaluation at least every three (3) years.
 - a. A report outlining the evaluation framework, process and findings shall be publicly released and included with the state's subsequent WBL Strategic Plan.
 - b. The information gathered in the WBL program quality evaluation shall be utilized in the development of the WBL Strategic Plan (ref. Section 4).



Section 4: [Work-Based Learning Strategic Plan Development, Progress Monitoring and Reporting]

- A. The (*WBL Leadership Council*) shall develop (Year 1) or review and revise (every subsequent 3 years) the state's work-based learning (WBL) vision, definitions, continuum and strategic plan.
 - a. The statewide vision for WBL must articulate the role the WBL should play in the state's education-to-workforce system.
 - b. A formal state definition of a high-quality WBL program and continuum of WBL experiences should:
 - i. Fully represent the workforce values and priorities of the state in concert with federal language and supports.
 - ii. Reflect a defined continuum of progressive learning and experiences. Each WBL experience along the continuum should include:
 - 1. Description of experience;
 - 2. Where the experience fits within the state's WBL continuum;
 - 3. Governing policies, guidance and other requirements, if applicable;
 - 4. Prerequisites, such as age, grade level, courses or WBL experiences, skills, etc.;
 - 5. Specific WBL experience requirements, such as participation hours, secondary and/or postsecondary credits earned or compensation;
 - 6. Educator requirements and supports, including licensure or endorsement, student supervision and professional development;
 - 7. Employer requirements and responsibilities, including communication, feedback, supervision and experience design;
 - 8. Intended student outputs and outcomes for students (i.e., What should students know and be able to do at the conclusion of a high-quality experience?); and
 - 9. Description of how student participation, skills growth or mastery and experience quality are measured, evaluated and reported, if applicable.
 - iii. Address program equity in support of all students.
 - iv. Be accompanied by program quality indicators (PQIs) and a PQI rubric that will be used to measure program achievement against the established program quality measures.
- B. The WBL Strategic Plan shall include goals, measurable objectives, action steps and recommendations.
 - a. The measurable goals and objectives must include, at a minimum:
 - i. Measurable goal(s) and objectives related to student access and equity across industry sectors.
 - ii. Measurable goal(s) and objectives related to WBL program quality across all WBL experiences in the state's continuum.
 - iii. Measurable goal(s) related to student and employer participation and outcomes.
 - b. The WBL Strategic Plan actions steps and recommendations must, at a minimum, ensure:
 - i. K-16 students have access to authentic WBL experiences that are relevant and consistent for each student as well as aligned with each student's interests and career goals.
 - ii. Students are active participants in holistic WBL learning experiences that integrate academic, technical and employability skills learning and mastery.
 - iii. Representation of historically underserved student groups in high-quality WBL opportunities and courses.
 - iv. Appropriate data collection methods exist to assess quality of implementation, such as WBL program quality indicators (PQIs) and WBL PQI rubric; and appropriate dissemination methods of the collected data to all impacted stakeholders.
 - v. Alignment of educator preparation program and educator licensure/endorsement standards with requirements to teach/coordinate WBL.
 - vi. High-quality professional development and resources that support local WBL implementation and integration of high-quality WBL into instruction for teachers/faculty, school counselors/advisors, administrators and employers.
 - vii. Rigor in WBL standards, or development of high-quality standards where necessary (such as a Career Exploration course).
 - viii. Alignment between the state's priority industries and occupations and students' WBL experiences related to those industries and occupations.
 - ix. Effective communications channels and strategies exist to support the cross-sector work of implementing high-quality WBL.



- x. Specific strategies, such as incentives, new policies, or repurposing resources, are implemented to address the challenges, gaps and barriers identified in the WBL program quality evaluation.
- C. The WBL Strategic Plan shall align with, and support, the goals and metrics outlined in the following state plans and initiatives:
 - a. Agency-specific strategic plans for all member agencies (where they exist).
 - b. State plans (independent or combined) required to receive federal funding related to the education-to-workforce system, including (but not limited to):
 - i. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA);
 - ii. Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V);
 - iii. Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA);
 - iv. Higher Education Act (HEA);
 - v. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA); and
 - vi. *(optional) (Name of state-specific initiative/goal - repeat as necessary)*
- D. *(optional)* The WBL Strategic Plan shall be developed in conjunction with the (Annual Review of CTE Offerings).
- E. The WBL Strategic Plan shall be released for public comment and feedback prior to being submitted to *(leader/title)*.
- F. The WBL Leadership Council shall monitor and annually publish a progress report outlining progress toward the goals, measurable objectives, action steps and recommendations outlined in the WBL strategic plan. This report shall include any changes to policy, initiatives or funding, as well as additional strategies or challenges identified.
- G. The *(Chair of WBL Leadership Council)* shall submit a copy of the WBL strategic plan and annual progress report to the governor, *(Speaker of the Senate)* and *(Speaker of the House)* by *(date)* of each year.

Section 5: [Effective Date]

The Act becomes effective _____.