Work-Based Learning (WBL)

Work-Based Learning advances student skills development and prepares students to make well-informed college and career choices.

Role of Work-Based Learning (WBL)

In order to improve academic performance and postsecondary outcomes, students should have access to developmentally appropriate work-based learning experiences that build upon their academic and career interests. Programs should provide meaningful opportunities for students to demonstrate skills and knowledge.

CTE has developed a Operations Guide to Work-Based Learning compiling information on 11 WBL activities from 200+ resources. Recommendations comply with all CPS and CTE requirements and align to the State of Illinois’ P20 Illinois Pathways Initiative. The WBL Guide can be downloaded at: http://www.chooseyourfuture.org/cte/staff/resources

Recommended WBL Sequence

WBL activities are “stacked” developmentally, where each WBL activity provides the skills foundation for the next activity.

CTE Recommended WBL Sequence

10th Grade Service Learning:
Students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of a community while advancing a students’ personalized education and career plan. Unlike volunteerism, service learning is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum and strongly emphasizes structured reflection on learning.

11th Grade - Job Shadows
Students accompany an outside volunteer to a workplace setting where they observe and learn about roles, responsibilities, and required skill sets associated with an occupation within a cluster and pathway aligned to their personalized plan of study. In addition, Job Shadows provide students with opportunities to expand their professional network.

11th & 12th Grade - Internships
Students participate in a work-related experience in a company setting where they perform the roles and functions of one or many occupations specific to a cluster and pathway that aligns with their personalized plan of study. Students should have clearly defined goals for how the internship advances their skill sets and allows them to demonstrate their knowledge through applied learning. CTE focuses mainly on placing students in summer internship but does offer a smaller number of winter and spring break opportunities.

Optional Senior Year - Cooperative Education
A experiential, independent study course co-engineered by students, teachers and outside partners that is designed to advance a student’s personalized plan of study as they engage in advanced pathway courses within a given cluster pathway. Program consists of a CTE classroom course and a employer on-site work experience.

All Years - Project Based Learning
Project-Based Learning (PBL) is focused experiential learning organized around student-centered investigation and resolution of real-world problems identified with input from outside stakeholders. PBL organizes curriculum around this holistic problem, enabling student learning in relevant and connected ways. PBL creates a learning environment in which teachers coach student thinking and guide student inquiry, facilitating learning toward deeper levels of understanding while entering the inquiry as a co-investigator.
WBL Placement Process

WBL Placement Coordination

- **Job Shadow & Internships**: Coordinated by the CTE Partnership Development Liaisons (PDL). If your school conducts its own programs, please coordinate with Partnership Development so that we can support and record your achievements. CTE’s Partner Development teams manages a comprehensive opportunity sourcing and placement program for all interested, work-ready eligible students.

- **Service Learning**: Coordinated by Academy Coordinators in partnership with school based service learning coordinators. *Eligibility criteria below does not apply.*

- **Co-op**: Coordinated by Schools in partnership with Sandra Castillo, CTE Program Coordinator.

WBL Placement Eligibility & Terms

**Work-Ready**: CTE students whose Employability Assessment scores are “Yes” on all fundamentals and ≥ 2 on all Work-Ethic/Character Skills.

**Work-Based Learning (WBL) Eligible**: CTE work-ready students who on the Student Interest Survey expressed that they were interested in their program pathway and are available to participate (no other scheduling conflicts such as sports, summer school, etc)

Job Shadow & Internship Placement Process

- Teachers complete online Employability Assessment for all students based on observations over the quarter.
- Students complete online Student Interest Survey (SIS) securing interest and availability data.
- Students rated “Work-Based Learning Eligible” are made WBL offers through CPS Email from a partner Development Liaison.
- Students who were not assessed and did not complete the survey will not be offered a placement.
- Student who respond and accept offers in a timely manner will receive confirmation of their placement. Students will receive an Offer Sheet.
- Student who are unresponsive will be re-prioritized below other eligible candidates.
- Students who have accepted offers will attend a pre-workshop or orientation before the start date or event.
- Student arrive on time at the placement site on the proper start date.
- Student who no show to the placement will receive a call. Each school has authority to design their own response. No Show students will not be prioritized for future work-based learning opportunities.

CTE Recommends that Principals monitor Employability Assessment completion, Student Interest Survey Completion and WBL Placements as part of student performance management.

**Online Employability Assessment and Student Interest Survey (SIS) Completion Tracking**

Use a CPS login. [https://internal.etccchicago.com/admin/cteworkreadycompletion.aspx](https://internal.etccchicago.com/admin/cteworkreadycompletion.aspx)

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**Online Work-Based Learning Placement Tracker**

Use a CPS login. [https://internal.etccchicago.com/admin/studenttrackingplacements.aspx](https://internal.etccchicago.com/admin/studenttrackingplacements.aspx)

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Work-Based Learning Milestones by Date

**SEPTEMBER**
- Present an overview of Employability Skills to new sophomores

**OCTOBER**
- Conduct Q1 Employability Assessment & Student Interest Survey
- Make offers and placements for winter break internships

**NOVEMBER**
- Make offers and placements for March job shadow day

**DECEMBER**
- Make offers and placements for Spring Break Internships

**JANUARY**
- Conduct Q3 Employability Assessment & Student Interest Survey
- Make offers and placements for Summer internships

**FEBRUARY**
- Make offers and placements for Spring Break Internships

**MARCH**
- Job Shadow
- Internship Orientation
- Summer Internship

**APRIL**
- Job Shadow Evaluation

**MAY**
- Internship Evaluation

**JUNE**

**JULY**

**AUGUST**
- Internship Evaluation
CTE Service Learning

Action-based citizen education where students directly impact community as well as their own self development.

**CTE Commitment to Service Learning**

CTE values service learning as a critical component to a student’s educational development. Service learning is one of the most powerful forms of work-based learning due to its ability to drive academic, technical, employability and social/emotional development outcomes. CTE is positioning service learning at the 9th and 10th grades to intervene at a critical time when students are beginning to question the value of their education in the real world. CTE believes service learning can help students connect how classroom curriculum, both academic and technical, can directly impact social issues in their own community. As students begin to see themselves as active change agents not passive recipients, they will be less likely to drop out.

**Community Partnerships**

CTE is excited to harness the passion, commitment and intelligence of its students towards well-structured, well-researched service learning projects. Building quality community relationships will be critical to the success of this service learning vision. CTE is unique in that its students are enrolled in career programs where they are learning specific technical skills related to a industry occupation. CTE looks to source and develop service learning projects that align to these occupations making the direct connection between career and community development.

Service Learning provided students a chance impact the issues they care about, in their own way, with their own voice.

**Service Learning Mission and Goals**

- **Definition:** Service-learning is a powerful, hands-on teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful service and classroom content. The process creates authentic learning opportunities while teaching civic responsibility through service to others with reciprocal benefits for all involved.
- **Mission:** Service-learning will deepen and extend classroom instruction for CPS high school students in all subject areas to improve academic achievement, build social skills, and develop civic skills and attitudes. Through participation in curriculum-integrated service-learning projects, students will have opportunities to work toward the common good as they develop a strong sense of social responsibility and civic awareness.
- **Goals:** All schools generate opportunities for classroom-integrated service-learning experiences with students. All students participate actively in service-learning experiences to build higher order academic skills, strengthen relationships, and develop civic skills. Community organizations partner with schools to provide authentic service-learning experiences.
- **Core Educational Criteria:** Investigation, Planning, Action, Reflection, Demonstration

**Service-Learning Graduation Requirement: Classroom Integrated Service Projects**

Beginning with the 2010-11 academic year, a cohort of opt-in CPS high schools will provide support and guidance to enable all students to complete a revised project-oriented service-learning graduation requirement. The graduation requirement for all high school students will be the completion of three substantive, high quality service-learning projects during their four years in high school. These projects will create the foundation for continued civic engagement during high school, college and beyond.
Job Shadows are one-day deep dives into a specific career where students engage in hands-on occupational exploration and learning.

CTE IS COMMITTED TO HELPING STUDENTS EXPAND THEIR OPPORTUNITY NETWORK

CTE believes that students should have every opportunity to explore multiple paths to their future. CTE works diligently to provide opportunities for students to explore their career interests in both classroom and real-world environments. Many CTE students have not directly experienced a professional work environment leaving major knowledge gaps in career awareness and work-culture norms. Often students do not experience this until their first job when the stakes are high. A job shadow is a safe and supportive way to provide students a window into the professional world working alongside a caring professional mentor who is genuinely interested in the student’s future.

CTE JOB SHADOWS OCCUR WHEN STUDENTS ARE BEGINNING TO TEST VARIOUS CAREER IDENTITIES

CTE programs are delivered over a three-year continuum from sophomore to senior year. Job Shadows are scheduled in March of the Junior year. By this point, CTE students have completed 1.5 years of CTE curriculum where they focused on technical and employability skills development. During this instructional period, CTE teachers use project-based learning to simulate real-world context while still providing a scaffolded learning environment. The job shadow serves a real-world one-day deep-dive into a work environment where classroom learning comes alive in a new context. During the day, a student partners with an industry professional who serves as part coach, part teacher and part mentor. The mentor serves as a new sounding board for students’ career and educational interests without the pressure of teacher or parent expectations.

A job shadow creates a critical link between students and their future by providing a “day in the life” of a desired career.

GOAL: BUILDING BRIDGES

★ Students rate participating in hands-on work activity as a critical job shadow success factor
  • Allow students to connect with a professional career mentor who is genuinely interested in their career goals
  • Expand horizons by creating a breadth of opportunities for students to engage in various Dept.al activities
  • Demonstrate connection between school and career by showing what skills are in demand
  • Discuss how you use lifelong learning (informal and formal) to build your skills while on the job
  • Create a list of potential leading questions that encourage the student to reflect on their interests, skills, and aspirations
  • Provide an opportunity for student to build on their industry network by engaging persons across departments
  • Get to know students’ career and educational goals and provide feedback on goal setting and planning
  • Demonstrate a caring, professional adult relationship based on mutual respect

PROGRAM DESIGN: INTERACTIVE - NOT PASSIVE LEARNING

• Job shadow program is explicitly designed to integrate with academic, technical and employability curriculum, and likewise the curriculum develops the skills necessary to maximize the job shadow experience
• Job shadow visits have structure and a specific learning agenda to allow for learning as well as social interaction
• Student matches are based upon their employability assessment scores and specific career interests
• Students are provided pre-shadow workshops focused on employability skills
• Students conduct independent research on their specific company and occupation of their shadow mentor
• Shadow mentors should be a credible source of career information and have an expressed interest in participating
• Shadow mentor should be encouraged to allow youth to actively participate in day’s work activity, not just observe
• Teachers should conduct well-planned post-visit classroom activities to reinforce the school trip experiences
• Teachers must establish direct consequences for students who do not act professionally during site visit
CTE Internship Programs

Internships provide full career immersion with responsibility for real, necessary tasks that matter to an employer.

CTE is committed to offering challenging and empowering real-world application of its career programs

CTE is committed to providing every work-ready student the opportunity to apply their skills in a high impact internship. Internships are a powerful form of work-based learning involving meaningful work with responsibility and accountability. An internship should challenge the student to apply and build on their academic, technical and employability skills. Unlike youth employment, internships are highly structured learning programs where workplace supervisors are responsible for student development and workplace performance. Balancing this dynamic is what transforms entry-level work into a powerhouse of learning and development.

CTE internships target the junior summer when college and career goals become eminently important

CTE programs are delivered over a three year continuum from sophomore to senior year. Internships target the summer after Junior year. By this point, CTE students have completed two years of CTE curriculum where they focused on technical and employability skills development. During this instructional period, CTE teachers use project-based learning to simulate real-world context while still providing a scaffolded learning environment. The internship marks the transition from a highly structured classroom to an independent workplace where students apply their skills to real tasks that have meaning for their internship host and supervisor. Students work with their supervisor to complete concrete work tasks and are held accountable for their work and behavioral performance.

Internships are on the critical path to students’ development, marking entrance into the adult world of external accountability.

Student goals: students embracing their new professionalism

• Youth are engaged in meaningful, responsible adult work supporting their path to maturity
• Youth increase their career preparedness and knowledge of the habits (skills and competencies) of compensated work
• Youth understand their own interests and abilities as they relate working in the 21st century economy
• Youth are motivated to be successful in school as they contextualize their work in a results-oriented environment
• Youth build an understanding of themselves as lifelong learners and apply this to their future schooling and careers
• Youth understand the relationship between work, personal income and lifelong earning
• Youth strengthen and improve their academic, technical and employability skills
• Youth understand the importance of relationships with people different from themselves
• Youth increase their sense of civic engagement and responsibility. They understand how work addresses a community or public purpose in addition to the commercial and profit-seeking aspects
• Youth build self-confidence and maturity by working with adults in a business environment
• Youth include their families in the learning experience. Youth help build pride among family members for their involvement in learning and new opportunities, leading to higher expectations for lifelong achievement. Youth and families receive support to make internships a collective learning experience

Source: National Academy Foundation | Preparing Youth for Life: The Gold Standards for High School Internships

Model internship programs

Model internships are planned, structured, and evaluated by the intern, internship coordinator, internship site supervisor, and parents when possible. Effective internships provide interns with the opportunities to develop an understanding of the career area duties and responsibilities, terminology, climate, protocol, and other information that will enable interns to meaningfully analyze and revise their future plans.
CTE Co-Operative Education (Co-op)

Co-op is a year-long, employer-based work study program for CTE’s most promising seniors.

**Goal of Cooperative Education at CTE**

Cooperative education (a.k.a. ‘coop’ or ‘work study’) is intended as a year-long, work-based learning experience for CTE’s most promising senior CTE students. Cooperative education programs are designed to give on-the-job advanced skills training in a chosen CTE pathway.

**Top Elements of a Successful Cooperative Education Program**

- **Aligns with Student Interests**: Students are more apt to be engaged and perform well on the job when their work experience closely links to their personal and career interests.
- **Considers Employer Needs**: The best cooperative placements are mutually beneficial and serve both the student’s interests and the goals of the employer.
- **Includes Strong Employer Mentorship/Supervision**: Students are most successful when placed with an appropriate workplace mentor defined as someone comfortable working with youth and capable of providing the needed training, guidance, and feedback.
- **Incorporates Strong Teacher Supervision**: Students (especially those new to a workplace environment) benefit from the support of coaching; CPS requires at least 1 site visit/quarter and 1 point of contact with the employer per month.
- **Based on Written Training Plan / Agreement**: Developing a well-defined training agreement agreed upon by the employer, teacher, student, and parent/guardian is critical to ensure training expectations are clear for all parties.

Cooperative education programs are designed to give on-the-job advanced skills training in a chosen CTE pathway.

**Purpose & Benefits of Cooperative Education**

Employers often express concern that the education system does not prepare people with the type of work readiness and technical skills to meet their business needs. Students on the other hand are disengaged in classroom learning because it lacks real world relevancy. When both students and employers can collaborate to combine classroom learning with the application of knowledge and skills in the workplace, education becomes more engaging to students and better serves the needs of the business community.

**Benefits to Students**

- See firsthand the connection between classroom education and work
- Explore interest in a particular career area
- Further develop work readiness skills
- Build resume and improve future employability
- Explore career choices prior to making long-term college and career investments
- Earn wages while learning from skilled professionals

**Benefits to Employers**

- Discover and pre-screen potential employees
- Secure reliable part-time help
- Improve the skill level of future workers
- Improve community relations by helping local youth with employment and education
- Support provided certified training liaison (cooperative education teacher)
Project-Based Learning

Student-directed investigations that are complex in nature and have no pre-determined correct answer.

**Goal: Create Living Classrooms**

- Organize learning around projects that include complex tasks based on challenging questions or problems that involve students in design, problem solving, decision-making or investigative activities
- Allow students to take the lead, making critical choices and decisions in a supported learning environment
- Train students to draw on multiple disciplines to solve problems and deepen understanding
- Require students to develop and demonstrate essential skills and knowledge
- Build in opportunities for reflection and self-assessment

**Program: Projects Liberate Textbook Content**

- **Centrality**: the project is the central teaching strategy; students encounter and learn the central concepts of the subject via the project; projects in which students learn things that are outside the curriculum are not applicable; projects that simply serve to provide illustrations, examples, additional practice, or practical applications for material taught initially by direct classroom instruction are not applicable
- **Driving question**: the project is focused on questions or problems that "drive" students to encounter (and struggle with) the central concepts and principles of a discipline; definition of the project (for students) must be crafted to make a connection between activities and the underlying conceptual knowledge
- **Constructive Investigations**: an investigation is a goal-directed process that involves inquiry, knowledge building, and resolution; the central activities of the project must involve the transformation and construction of knowledge (by definition: new understandings, new skills) by students; investigations may be design, decision-making, problem-finding, problem-solving, discovery, or model-building processes
- **Autonomy**: the project is not, in the main, teacher-led, scripted, or packaged; laboratory exercises and instructional booklets are not examples of PBL, even if they are problem-focused and central to the curriculum; projects do not end up at a predetermined outcome or take predetermined paths; projects incorporate a good deal more student autonomy, choice, unsupervised work time
- **Realism**: the project incorporates real-life challenges where the focus is on authentic (not simulated) problems or questions and where solutions have the potential to be implemented

*Thomas, John W. Ph. D, A Review of Research on Project-based Learning, March, 2000*

**Management: Supporting Educational Self-Sufficiency**

- Teachers are trained in new management strategies that focus on sustaining student autonomy and motivation
- Project rubrics are designed to demand academic, technical and employability skill development
- Project scenarios are evaluated to ensure alignment to learning guidelines and are not simply team class assignments
- Explicit approval is given by Principal and CTE program coordinator to use PBL to augment standardized curriculum
- A range of scaffolds is in place from teachers, peers, and technology that will aid students in the process; this can include workshops on information gathering, team building, problem-solving
- Teachers ensure proper time is allotted for the completion of the project according to the established requirements; learning decreases when students are hurried through learning and project stages
- There should be a concrete kick-off to the project-based learning cycle
- Phase 1, teachers ensure that students question the validity of their original question before jumping into investigation
- Phase 2, teachers ensure that students create research designs that are adequate to answer their driving questions
- Phase 3, teachers ensure that students develop complete plans for data collection
- Phase 4, teachers ensure that students carry out plan systematically
- Phase 5, teachers ensure that students use data to substantiate their conclusions versus using personal opinion
- Host a presentation of learning at close of project; parents and industry partners should be invited to attend
- Report the success of your event to the Principal, CTE program coordinator and other school staff