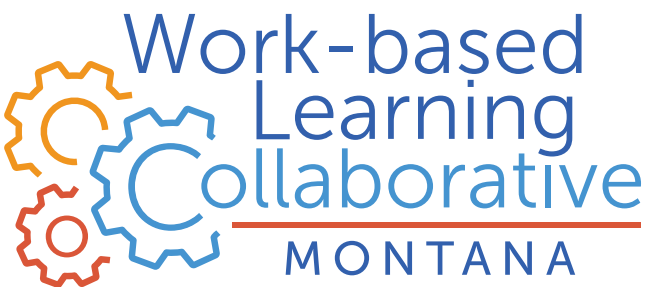


# Work-Based Learning

# FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions



# Let's cover the basics

## WHAT DOES WORK-BASED LEARNING (WBL) EVEN MEAN?

Work-based learning is learning about work,  
at work.

WBL can be short experiences that expose students to an industry or career like work site tour, job shadow, or informational interviews. WBL can also be a longer experience that also builds essential skills, such as an internship, supported summer job, or youth apprenticeship.



## WHAT IS CAREER EXPLORATION AND EXPOSURE?

These activities help students learn about careers, but do not take place in workplaces. These activities foster motivation, encourage students to be realistic about their goals, prepare them to make a plan, and help students discover opportunities so they can make informed decisions about their future.

Are you interested in learning more about work-based learning? Visit [wblmt.org](http://wblmt.org)

Questions? Connect with:

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# Learning about work, at work

## 4 Training

Apprenticeship, On-the-Job Training, Industry Recognized Credentials

## 3 Preparation

Internships, Service Learning, Student Run Enterprise, Supported Employment

## 2 Exploration

Career Research, Job Shadow, Extended Learning, Structured Field Trips, Informational Interviews

## 1 Awareness

Workplace Tours, Guest Speakers, Career Fairs, Interest Assessments, Community Involvement





# Employer FAQs

## **Do I absorb the liability that comes with a student during a WBL experience (workers comp, age restrictions, etc.)?**

If you pay students, follow OSHA laws, and have a good safety record most insurances will cover your workers compensation for students ages 16-18. Contact your workers compensation insurance to verify. If you use a staffing agency, agency will pay for the workers compensation insurance. The school usually covers insurance and workers comp for unpaid WBL experiences. Learn more, [here](#).

## **Why is it worth my time to host a student WBL experience for a student?**

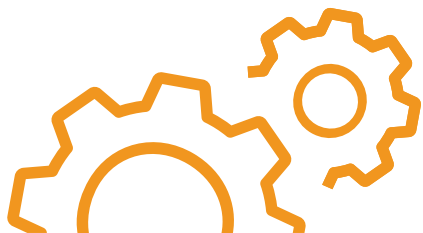
By participating in the WBL experience, employers can directly have a hand in cultivating the very skills you see are lacking in the workforce. This can ensure that, down the road, you have qualified employees with the skills and competencies that you are looking for. While it takes some extra effort to support developing employees, the return is well worth it!

## **What if I don't like working with kids as an employer/supervisor?**

WBL is a great way to build your workforce pipeline, and you don't have to do it alone! Students participating in WBL have the extra support of their school or program to help them be successful. Ask your newer employees to help support the students and provide a unique professional opportunity for your lower-level staff. Also, there are many WBL experiences for adults too!

## **What are the most important skills for students to learn? The "hard skills" of the trade or "soft" employability skills?**

The most important skills students learn through WBL are the transferable employability skills. These are things that EVERY employer and industry values; skills like working with a team, showing up on time, communicating with others, and responding well to authority (just to name a few). Ideally students also gain additional clarity about their future goals and skills related to the specific position or industry.





# Educator FAQs

## **Can WBL be tied to school credit?**

It is strongly recommended that work-based learning experiences tie to earned credit when facilitated by the school district. Credit towards graduation requirements for work-based learning may be offered when the program is part of an accredited program and supervised by the school. Work-based learning is a performance measure for secondary CTE programs.

## **How can we determine if the experience is robust enough to qualify for credit?**

The benchmark standard for awarding credit for WBL experiences is guided by local control through your school board.

Determining whether your school district has a “seat-time” requirement vs. a proficiency-based approach to awarding credit will determine the minimum requirements for awarding students credit for their experiences.

## **How do I know if I have the license I need to award that credit?**

You can check ARM (<https://rules.mt.gov/>) in regards to high school credit—10.55.906—which outlines the flexibility a district has to issue high school credits.

## **Why would I invest in facilitating WBL experiences since I am short on time?**

As a teacher, work-based learning is the planned and supervised connection of classroom experiences with the expectations and realities of work. You get to help students understand how the skills they learn in the classroom are transferable to skills needed for work.

## **Is my teaching license at risk if the student has an incident during a WBL experience?**

Students involved in WBL experiences can be covered for risk exposure in various ways. If the student is engaged in a non-paid internship or pre-apprenticeship, the District’s workers’ compensation will cover the student. If the experience is a paid experience, then the employer’s workers’ compensation kicks in. Typically, a work-based learning experience is worked out with the consent of the school administration and the student and family, so the teacher does not singly face high-risk exposure.

## **How can I award proficiency-based credit for this WBL experience?**

Montana recently passed legislation that specifically removes the seat time requirement for awarding credit. Students may now demonstrate a range of proficiencies to receive credit. As an example, a teacher can award credit to a student who can demonstrate all the proficiencies taught in a journalism class, who learned the skills working for a local newspaper. The new methodology opens numerous avenues to enhance student engagement and the likelihood of graduation.

# Student FAQs

## **Why is WBL worth my time as a student? I'm busy.**

WBL is a great way to get an inside look at a possible career, and can open doors to new opportunities. It's also guaranteed to help you build and practice skills that you will use as an adult. Through WBL, you have extra support from an employer as you're learning key skills. PLUS, you can often earn school credit while you work.

## **Can WBL be paid work hours if I am getting school credit?**

WBL can be paid or unpaid. You can earn school credit for both paid and unpaid experiences.

## **Isn't any work experience as a high school student WBL?**

It is WBL experience if you have goals, are reflecting on the experience, and are being assessed on what you are learning. It is not WBL if you are just working during the school day.

## **Is WBL only for high school students?**

WBL is for students of all ages. Introducing students to various careers and industries at a young age helps them to begin creating a future vision for themselves. As they enter their secondary education years, this vision can inform their electives in 8th - 12th grade, and even assist them in seeking or creating their own work-based learning opportunities that further that vision.

## **What role does family play in WBL?**

Family plays a crucial role in supporting your WBL experience and helping ensure it's successful. Family can offer guidance, ask you about your experience, celebrate achievements, be understanding when challenges arise, and help you organize and manage your time.

It is also helpful for your family to maintain open communication with the WBL coordinator to stay informed about expectations, progress, and concerns if they arise.

