

Types of Work-Based Learning Experiences

Work-based learning is an educational approach that uses the workplace to provide youth with the knowledge and skills that will help them connect school experiences to real-life work activities and future career opportunities.

For more information about work-based learning, see [Disability Hub MN's Youth in Transition toolkit](#).

TYPES OF WORK-BASED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

1

AWARENESS EXPERIENCES

In-School Work Experience

An experience intended for a student to understand the nature of work and build foundational skills.

Simulated Workplace Experiences

Activities that simulate work environments in any field. Examples include welding simulators and Junior Achievement programming.

Workplace Tours/Field Trips

An excursion for students to gain first-hand observation of specific work sites. Students learn about the business, meet employees, ask questions and observe work in progress. Often conducted in a group.

Volunteering

When a person donates their time or efforts for a cause or organization without being paid. It may be a one-time only or an on-going commitment. It should directly or indirectly benefit people outside the family or household or else benefit a cause. Most volunteer sites are non-profit organizations.

2

EXPLORATION EXPERIENCES

Informational Interviews

An informal conversation for a student with someone working in a career area/job that interests the student, who will give them information and advice. It is not a job interview and the objective is not to find job openings.

Job Shadowing

An opportunity for a student to observe different jobs and ask businesses questions about the skills, knowledge, and abilities needed to perform the tasks involved in the job.

Service Learning

Activity that integrates meaningful community service with classroom instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

TYPES OF WORK-BASED LEARNING EXPERIENCES *(continued)*

3 PREPARATION EXPERIENCES

Career Mentorship

An opportunity for a student to engage with a mentor who teaches or provides career-related guidance and advice.

Career Related Competitions

Activities that require students to demonstrate mastery of career-related skills through presentations or competition that are judged by professionals. Presentations demonstrate culminations of student effort over time, often involving teamwork. Career technical student organizations sponsor such competitions in the fields of agriculture, business, health, hospitality and industrial technology.

Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs)

Extracurricular groups for students in Career and Technical pathways to further their knowledge and skills by participating in activities, events, and competitions. There are 6 recognized CTSOs in Minnesota (Business Professionals of America (BPA); DECA; Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA); HOSA-Future Health Professionals; FFA; SkillsUSA).

Internships (Paid or Unpaid)

A time-limited opportunity available to students in situations where an internship will significantly enhance skill development and future opportunity for competitive integrated employment (e.g., students who are ready to begin work but have a gap in work history or need relevant work experience related to their educational training, students in a training program, or students currently enrolled in a postsecondary training program).

Practicum

A course of study devoted to practical training in the field, where supervision is provided. Usually applies to a specialized field of study.

Short-Term Work Experience (Paid)

A work experience in a community business where, typically, Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) subsidizes the wages. Is intended for a student to explore careers, understand the nature of work, and/or build foundational work skills.

Student-Led Enterprises

School-based enterprises that produce goods or services for sale or to be used by people other than the participating student(s).

4 IMPLEMENTATION EXPERIENCES

Competitive Integrated Work Experience

A “regular job” where an employer pays the student’s wages. It is also known as an “intermediate work experience” because it is a stepping-stone along a student’s career pathway (not typically their ultimate career-related job). It is intended for a student to explore careers, understand the nature of work, and/or build foundational work skills.

Youth Apprenticeship *(not including Pre-Apprenticeships or Registered Apprenticeships since these are focused on job skill development versus a mechanism for “career exploration”)*

School supported experiences for secondary students 16 years of age and older. Youth apprenticeship experiences focus on career preparation and training within a specific career pathway; require a minimum of 450 hours for completion; are always paid experiences; and lead to an industry-recognized credential of value for the youth apprentice whenever possible.