

Flexible Pathways Talking Points – Work Based Learning

Is this Flexible Pathway option the best choice? Below are prompting questions to be used with the [Vermont Flexible Pathways Tool](#) to assist in a conversation to determine if this pathway is the best fit. These sources do not represent an exhaustive list but are intended to provide a basis for discussion.

What is Work-Based Learning?

A WBL experience can range from career awareness to career preparation and training. Throughout a student's path through school, they can and should be exposed to a range of career paths, professionals, and work environments. These experiences can particularly help students make the connection between academic principles and real-world applications.

Work-based learning is an educational program or experience involving student interactions with industry or community professionals in real, virtual, online, or simulated work environments that expose learners to postsecondary options, provides opportunities for skill development and proficiency attainment, and allow students to reinforce and deepen their school-based learning. WBL experiences are available to students in both high school and career technology education (CTE) centers where you can participate in:

Career awareness WBL activities, such as having classroom speakers, completing interest inventories, or taking a field trip to a work site to understand the industry better. These experiences are integrated into class time for all students K-12.

Career exploration and *career preparation* WBL experiences can be individualized based on a student's PLP goals, or occupational goals while enrolled at a CTE. Generally facilitated by a WBL Coordinator, some types of opportunities can include informational interviews, job shadows, and/or paid and unpaid internships. Based on the type of opportunity and where the student is enrolled, there are restrictions to opportunities. WBL Coordinators can determine eligibility for a student based on the VT Department of Labor laws, and field of interest. Some of these experiences can count for course credit.

Career training WBL opportunities can include internships, co-ops, pre-apprenticeships, and registered apprenticeships. These are often more accessible to enrolled CTE students because of labor laws. Based on the type of industry, and where the student is enrolled, there are restrictions to opportunities so close communication between the student, WBL Coordinator, program instructor, and employer is important for these career training opportunities to be the most successful for student learning. WBL Coordinators can determine eligibility for a student based on the VT Department of Labor laws, and field of interest. In some specific cases students enrolled in general education high school can apply for this opportunity as well. These opportunities can count for course credit.

Why Work Based Learning?

- Career exploration
- Ready to explore opportunities not offered in high school
- Increased applicability of employment and occupational skills
- Better understanding of the expectations in the role at the workplace
- Engaging in the activities of people in the work environment

Contact Information:

If you have questions about this document or would like additional information please contact:

[Insert Staff or Team Name], [Division Name], at [Email] or [Phone]

- Explore and experience interesting tasks and topics.
- Explore work sites/industries, and learn how to navigate a workplace, interact with colleagues and superiors, and feel more like a professional.
- Become familiar with industry programs, systems, and expectations.
- Develop an identity as a professional with confidence in their ability to engage in and contribute in a workplace.

Are you ready for Work Based Learning?

- Work Based Learning eligibility requirements met
- Social emotional reflection
 - Self-awareness - Demonstrates self-advocacy, self-motivated
 - Social awareness – Understanding social and ethical norms
 - Self-management – Critical thinking, problem solving
 - Responsible decision making – Time management
 - Relationship skills – Communication, networking
 - Aware of learning environment in WBL setting and it is a good match for student
- Academic Reflection
 - WBL experience aligns with high school transcript
 - WBL experience aligns with learning goals in student PLP
 - Prerequisite course(s) completed
 - Course aligns with learning goals in PLP
 - Strong attendance record
 - The IEP team or the 504 team approves.
 - Updated IEP/504 documents
 - Become familiar with accommodations/modifications available
 - Completed CCV ICC
 - Demonstrates skills in:
 - Technology
 - Academic readiness shown in mathematics and writing to attend to workplace requirements
 - Any certifications or safety course pre-recs

Do you have?

- Parental and community, support outside of secondary school
- Transportation if needed
- Materials fees identified for the center or worksite to provide
- Adequate technology and internet access.
- Time built into your school schedule to pursue WBL

Have you?

- Discussed career pathways to employment with your school counselor
- Researched certifications that may be necessary after graduation (Adult Ed, Community College or employer)

Have you thought about?

- Being out of your high school for part or all of each day
- Time management tools you will use to balance a WBL opportunity with a desired dual enrollment course or sport/club activity and meeting personal obligations at home and/or an outside job
- Maintaining good grades in order to stay in your WBL placement

Did you know?

- You can talk with your employer about future job growth
- You will have a training agreement and/or training plan with employer, school, student, parents if you decide to do this opportunity