

Nebraska's Workplace Experiences Continuum

Nebraska is revitalizing its work-based learning (WBL) to provide meaning educational experiences for students and build a pipeline of talent into growing industries. Now titled **Nebraska's Workplace Experience Continuum**, this program provides multiple opportunities for students to interact with the workplace as they apply their academic and technical skills and grow and demonstrate their career readiness skills.

This initiative has been a collaborative effort between the Nebraska Departments of Education, Economic Development and Labor. All three have a vested interest in creating a workplace experience program resulting in a prepared workforce to addresses Nebraska's labor market needs and economic priorities.

What is the Nebraska Workplace Experience Continuum?

The continuum is designed to be a series of instructional strategies that begins with work awareness and continues through exploration to demonstration through actual student engagement with employers. These strategies prepare students for success in postsecondary education and careers through direct experiences in the workplace and community. These strategies are intentionally designed to augment classroom/laboratory instruction and address learning outcomes that are difficult to achieve through the classroom/laboratory alone.

Why Workplace Experiences?

- To enhance student learning through varied experiences connected to the workplace
- To provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skill in real-world situations
- To assist the student in preparing for success in a changing workplace Students may be 19-20 before they take their first full-time job.
- According to Gallup, business leaders value an internship or on-the-job training more than the college major or grades of employees.
- Students who have four or more exposures to work earn 18% more

What are the outcomes of participation in the Workplace Experience Continuum?

- Knowledge of career options and preferences
- Knowledge of skills required for success in identified careers
- Development and application of academic knowledge and skills
- Development and application of technical knowledge and skills
- Development and demonstration of career readiness skills



NEBRASKA WORKPLACE EXPERIENCES CONTINUUM

Awareness Strategies

Career-Based Service Learning
Career Fairs
Research Projects
Videos
Speakers
Lunch & Learn

Exploration Strategies

Business Tours/
Fieldtrips
Job Shadow Mentorship
Simulation
Summer Camp/Summer
Experience

Work-Based Learning Strategies

May Require Work-Based Learning Endorsement

Apprenticeships
Cooperative Education
Education/Training Experiences
Entrepreneurship
Health Science Clinical
Internships
Pre-apprenticeships
Rule 47 Academy Internship
School-Based Enterprises

Career Readiness Skills Identification

Career Readiness Skills Development

Career Readiness Skills Demonstration

Career Technical Student Organizations

Nebraska Workplace Experience Continuum – Awareness Strategies

	Career-Based Service Learning	Career Fair	Career Research Project	Career Video	Guest Speaker	Lunch & Learn Session
Required Teacher Certification	Nebraska Teaching Certificate	Nebraska Teaching Certificate	Nebraska Teaching Certificate	Nebraska Teaching Certificate	Nebraska Teaching Certificate	Nebraska Teaching Certificate
Concurrent Classroom Instruction	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Grade Level	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	K-12	6-12
Summer School Credit	Yes (if the Coordinator is on an extended contract, and the student is enrolled in summer school.)	Yes (if the Coordinator is on an extended contract, and the student is enrolled in summer school.)	Yes (if the Coordinator is on an extended contract, and the student is enrolled in summer school.)	Yes (if the Coordinator is on an extended contract, and the student is enrolled in summer school.)	Yes (if the Coordinator is on an extended contract, and the student is enrolled in summer school.)	Yes (if the Coordinator is on an extended contract, and the student is enrolled in summer school.)
Credit	Option for class credit	Option for class credit	Option for class credit	Option for class credit	Option for class credit	Option for class credit
Coordination/ Supervision	NE Teaching Certificate	NE Teaching Certificate	NE Teaching Certificate	NE Teaching Certificate	NE Teaching Certificate	NE Teaching Certificate
Required Plans and Agreements	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Students Paid for Work	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

This document is intended only as an overview of current and potential future work-based learning options under consideration. It is not a legal interpretation and is not a substitute for legal advice. It is not a statement or interpretation of child labor laws.

Nebraska Workplace Experience Continuum – Exploration Strategies

	Business Tour	Field Trip	Job Shadow	Mentorship	Simulation	Summer Camp	Summer Experience
Required Teacher Certification	Nebraska Teaching Certificate	Nebraska Teaching Certificate	Nebraska Teaching Certificate	Nebraska Teaching Certificate	Nebraska Teaching Certificate	Nebraska Teaching Certificate	Nebraska Teaching Certificate
Concurrent Classroom Instruction	Incorporated with a class assignment	Incorporated with a class assignment	Incorporated with a class assignment	Incorporated with a class assignment	Incorporated with a class assignment	Incorporated with a class assignment	Incorporated with a class assignment
Grade Level	7-12	7-12	7-12	7-12	7-12	7-12	7-12
Credit	Usually incorporated as a class assignment	Usually incorporated as a class assignment	Usually incorporated as a class assignment	Usually incorporated as a class assignment	Usually incorporated as a class assignment	Usually incorporated as a class assignment	Usually incorporated as a class assignment
Coordination/Supervision	Class Instructor	Class Instructor	Class Instructor	Class Instructor	Class Instructor	Class Instructor	Class Instructor
Required Plans and Agreements	Incorporated as a class assignment with follow-up student reflection on the experience	Incorporated as a class assignment with follow-up student reflection on the experience	Incorporated as a class assignment with follow-up student reflection on the experience	Incorporated as a class assignment with follow-up student reflection on the experience	Incorporated as a class assignment with follow-up student reflection on the experience	Incorporated as a class assignment with follow-up student reflection on the experience	Incorporated as a class assignment with follow-up student reflection on the experience
Students Paid for Work	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

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Nebraska Workplace Experience Continuum – Work Based-Learning Strategies

	Apprenticeships	Cooperative Education	Education and Training Experience	Entrepreneurship	Health Science Clinical	Internship	Pre-Apprenticeship	Rule 47 Career Academy Internship	School-Based Enterprises	Supervised Agricultural Experience
Required Teacher Certification	NA	CE Endorsed Teacher with Work-Based Learning Endorsement	Nebraska Teaching Certificate	CE Endorsed Teacher with Work-Based Learning Endorsement	Health Science Teaching Certificate with Work-Based Learning Endorsement	CE Endorsed Teacher in Instructional area with Work-Based Learning Endorsement	CE Endorsed Teacher with Work-Based Learning Endorsement	CE Endorsed Teacher in Academy area with Work-Based Learning Endorsement	CE Endorsed Teacher	AFNR Teaching Certificate Work-Based Learning Endorsement
Concurrent Classroom Instruction	Yes – offered through apprenticeship	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Grade Level	Must be 18	11-12	11-12	9-12	11-12	11-12	11-12	11-12	9-12	7-12
Summer School Credit	NA	Yes (if the Coordinator is on an extended contract, and the student is enrolled in summer school.)	NA	Yes (if the Coordinator is on an extended contract, and the student is enrolled in summer school.)	Yes (if the Coordinator is on an extended contract, and the student is enrolled in summer school.)	Yes (if the Coordinator is on an extended contract, and the student is enrolled in summer school.)	Yes (if the Coordinator is on an extended contract, and the student is enrolled in summer school.)	Yes (if the Coordinator is on an extended contract, and the student is enrolled in summer school.)	Yes (if the Coordinator is on an extended contract, and the student is enrolled in summer school.)	Yes (if the Coordinator is on an extended contract, and the student is enrolled in summer school.)
Credit	NA	Option for class credit and work credit	Optional credit for work experience	Optional credit	Optional credit for work experience	Optional credit for work experience	Optional credit for work experience	Optional credit for work experience	Optional credit for work experience	Optional credit for work experience
Coordination /Supervision	Provided by apprenticeship program	Work-Based Learning Supervisor	Education and Training Teacher	Work-Based Learning Supervisor	Health Science Teacher	Aligned Instructor	CE Certified Teacher	Academy Teacher	CE Certified Teacher	AFNR Certified Teacher
Required Plans and Agreements	Training plan and training agreement	Training plan and training agreement	Education and Training Internship Agreement and Professional Work Sample Portfolio	Training plan and training agreement	Training Agreement, Student Confidentiality Statement, and CPR Certification	Training plan and training agreement	Training plan and training agreement	Agreement and Work Sample Portfolio as required by the Academy	Training Plan	Training plan and training agreement
Students Paid for Work	Paid	Yes	Usually No	Yes	Usually No	Yes	May be paid	May be paid	Usually No	May be paid

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Career Readiness Skill Development

One of the significant educational opportunities a workplace experience program provides is the development of career readiness skills (employability skills). Nebraska employers have identified the lack of career readiness skills as a high priority and one that is having a negative impact on their productivity.

The top three areas of concern identified by Nebraska employers are:

1. The inability to separate personal from professional
 - a. Cell phone usage
 - b. Bringing personal drama and issues to the workplace
2. Meeting Basic Expectations
 - a. Regular Attendance
 - b. Reporting on Time
 - c. Following Policies and Procedures
 - d. Drug Testing
3. Mutual Respect and Collaboration
 - a. Respect for different races/cultures
 - b. Ability to work collaboratively without regard to individual credit
 - c. Need for individual attention and recognition

Nationally identified concerns are:

50%	Poor Work Ethic
47%	Poor Time Management Skills
38%	Lack of Organizational Skills
35%	Not Confident
32%	Cannot Speak Well to a Group
30%	Poor at Decision-Making
29%	Can't Work on a Team
28%	Lack Relevant Work Experience
25%	Don't Write Well
19%	Lack Ability to Take Risks
9%	Not up to speed on technology



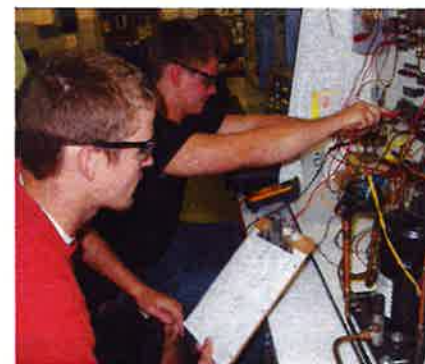
Nebraska Approval Process for Work-Based Learning Strategy Programs

Nebraska school districts conducting programs at the work-based learning strategy level, must request program approval from the Nebraska Department of Education. This approval remains in effect until the district makes changes in the program such as the program coordinator, and related classes.

A program must have the following minimum components to be approvable:

- A teacher with appropriate certification including the work-based learning endorsement to serve as the work-based learning coordinator.
- Instruction is provided by the school district in the technical skill area the student will be experiencing in the work-based learning program.
- The student-learner works intermittent, short periods of time under the direct and close supervision of the coordinator.
- Assurance to adhere to Fair Labor Standards Act
- Safety instructions are provided by the school and correlated by the employer with on-the-job-training.
- A schedule of organized and progressive work processes to be performed on the job is prepared.
- Employer agrees to provide training, supervision and adherence to safety protocol.
- Written evaluation of student performance provided by employer and coordinator.
- Pay must be at the minimum wage or training rate wage.
 - Additional requirements are in place for training rate wage.
- Signatures of student, parent, teacher coordinator and employer.

Program approval allows the student learners to work in those hazardous occupations where exceptions are allowed for student-learners.



Hazardous Occupations as Defined by Fair Labor Standards Act

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) prohibits minors under age 18 years old to work in any occupation that it deems to be hazardous. Among these occupations are excavation, manufacturing explosives, mining, and operating many types of power-driven equipment. Certain industries allow minors under age 18 to perform certain tasks at worksites whose primary work activity is dangerous, but these tasks are very specific and the state and federal government closely monitor compliance.

<https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/youthlabor/hazardousjobs>

Hazardous Occupation	Exemption for Student Learner in Approved Program
§570.51 Occupations in or about plants or establishments manufacturing or storing explosives or articles containing explosive components (Order 1).	None
§570.52 Occupations of motor-vehicle driver and outside helper (Order 2).	None
§570.53 Coal-mine occupations (Order 3).	None
§570.54 Forest fire fighting and forest fire prevention occupations, timber tract occupations, forestry service occupations, logging occupations, and occupations in the operation of any sawmill, lath mill, shingle mill, or cooperage stock mill (Order 4).	None
§570.55 Occupations involved in the operation of power-driven woodworking machines (Order 5).	Yes
§570.57 Exposure to radioactive substances and to ionizing radiations (Order 6).	None
§570.58 Occupations involved in the operation of power-driven hoisting apparatus (Order 7).	None
§570.59 Occupations involved in the operation of power-driven metal forming, punching, and shearing machines (Order 8).	Yes
§570.60 Occupations in connection with mining, other than coal (Order 9).	None
§570.61 Occupations in the operation of power-driven meat-processing machines and occupations involving slaughtering, meat and poultry packing, processing, or rendering (Order 10).	Yes
§570.62 Occupations involved in the operation of bakery machines (Order 11).	None
§570.63 Occupations involved in the operation of balers, compactors, and paper-products machines (Order 12).	Yes
§570.64 Occupations involved in the manufacture of brick, tile, and kindred products (Order 13).	None
§570.65 Occupations involving the operation of circular saws, band saws, guillotine shears, chain saws, reciprocating saws, wood chippers, and abrasive cutting discs (Order 14).	Yes
§570.66 Occupations involved in wrecking, demolition, and shipbreaking operations (Order 15).	None
§570.67 Occupations in roofing operations and on or about a roof (Order 16).	Yes
§570.68 Occupations in excavation operations (Order 17).	Yes

Suggested Components of a Work-Based Learning Strategy Portfolio

A suggested portfolio that provides evidence of learning would include the following artifacts:

1. Career Development Materials

- a. Student Personal Learning Plan
- b. Resume
- c. Application for employment
- d. Letters of recommendation
- e. Career assessment results

2. Documentation of Learning and Progress

- a. List of responsibilities undertaken throughout the experience
- b. Documents reflecting skills, tasks and experiences

3. Work Samples/Artifacts

- a. Examples of materials developed throughout the experience
- b. Documentation of experiences on-the-job
- c. Research projects completed
- d. Presentations made
- e. Writing samples
- f. Documentation of skills developed

4. Employer Supervisor and Teacher Coordinator Reflections

- a. Copies of materials from employer supervisor documenting achievements, learning and experiences
- b. Copies of materials from teacher coordinator documenting achievements, learning and experiences

5. Student Reflections

- a. Journal entries
- b. Documentation of student learning
- c. Future plans

Nebraska's Workplace Experience Continuum Misconception vs Fact

There are a number of misconceptions about 16- and 17-year-old students participating in work-based learning. This sheet has been prepared to provide information on common misconceptions about work-based learning. This should not be construed as legal advice, but rather information provided for school districts and employers to seek additional information from their legal counsel and insurance companies if needed.

Misconception	Fact
Anyone can supervise or coordinate student's work-based learning	There are some instructional strategies in Nebraska's Workplace Experience Continuum that any teacher or volunteer can coordinate or provide. However, for those strategies that place students in the actual workplace for paid or unpaid experiences or internships, the teacher must have the Work-Based Learning Endorsement (formerly known as Cooperative Education) on their Teaching Certificate. A chart is attached that identifies the strategies that require the additional endorsement. This endorsement is an indication that the teacher is knowledgeable on legal, safety and other issues that may impact a meaningful educational experience for the student. It is also an indication of the teacher's ability to monitor and document the experiences.
16 and 17-year-old students cannot participate in internships or work-based learning experiences	Nebraska's work-based learning strategies as identified in the Workplace Experiences Continuum provide a capstone experience for students working with an employer. The work-based learning strategies require that students be at least 16 years of age. Students enrolled in Nebraska Career Education programs that implement work-based learning strategies can do more than the average youth based on enrollment as a student learner in a work-based learning program in a high school. This includes working in advanced manufacturing, construction and agriculture. Proper instruction, required forms and paperwork protect employers, school districts and students by documenting eligibility and compliance with the law.
The workplace is too dangerous for minors.	There are only a few prohibited occupations for minors who are 16 or older that are unrelated to your workplace or industry as a whole. In most cases, OSHA requirements ensure that the employer is already protecting employees to the same extent needed to protect a minor. There are many roles that young people can fill to give them valuable exposure to the workplace to spark an interest in long-term employment.
There's too much liability at stake for our company to work with minors.	Workers' Compensation protects every employee equally, regardless of age. Neither age nor years of experience are calculated into the cost of providing workers' compensation nor the payout of claims. Workers' Compensation is calculated in the same way for all workers regardless of age and is based on (a) salary and (b) the classification of the actual job the WBL student is hired to do. As a result, actual costs are low for hiring WBL students and existing protections are sufficient. Unpaid internships also allow students to gain work experience without being considered an "employee" if they are primarily on site to learn and receive no direct compensation from the company. In such cases, commercial liability insurance (companies) and high-risk accident insurance (school districts) protect students and companies.