

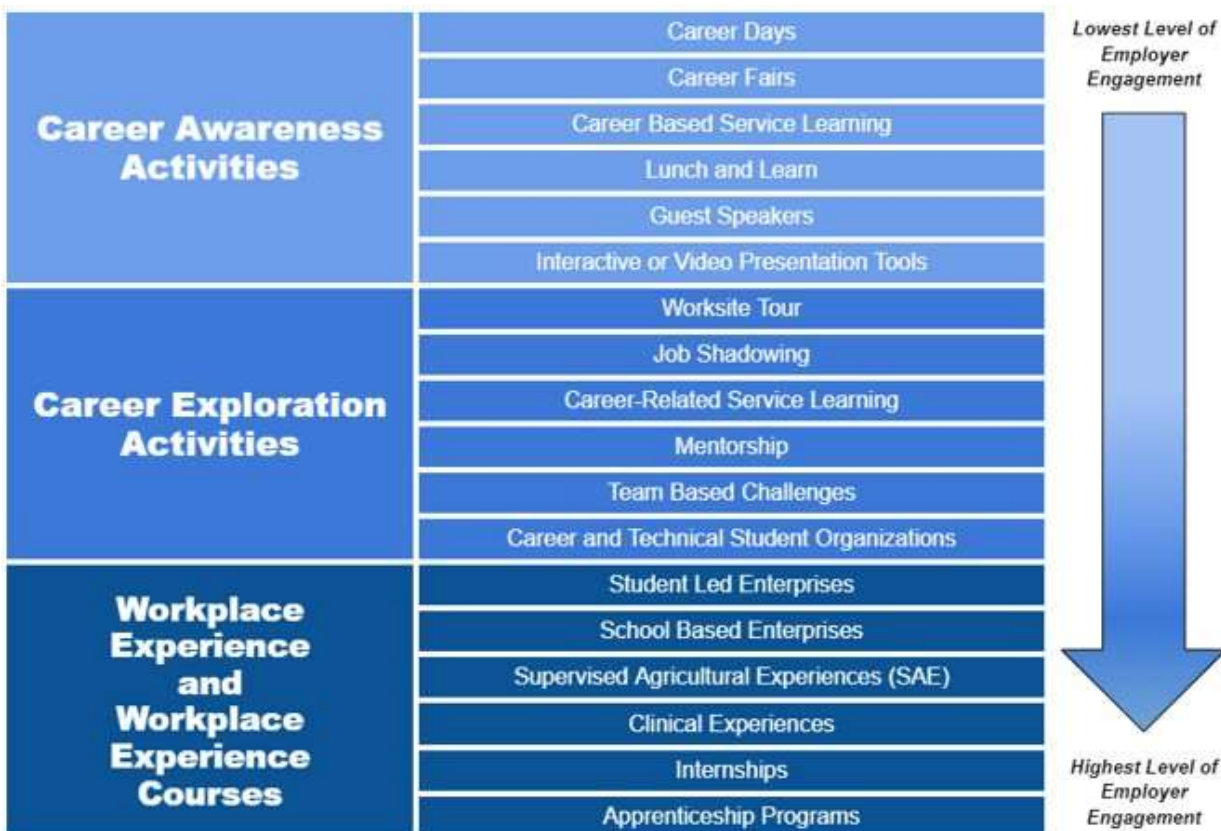
Financial Considerations with Staff, Transportation, Supplies, and More

Introduction

When taking on the WBL initiatives in your district or school, there are numerous funding questions that come to fruition after discussing the needs of high functioning programs. While many of the activities will include free services, intergovernmental memorandum of understanding, and community donated time, others will cost dollars to the district through strategic planning. The following ideas related to WBL funding will be covered in this module:

- Career Awareness platforms and software
- Considerations with Staffing and Scheduling
- Extra-curricular finances for CTSOs, Service Learning Projects, Student Led and School Based Enterprises
- Transportation costs
- Student supplies, uniforms and tools
- Continuous Professional Development of teachers/coordinators

Career Awareness Platforms and Software



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Career Awareness activities are taking place earlier in a student's education as the state of Illinois has updated its legislation to include grades as early as 6th grade in the PaCE Framework. Educators have brought about questions on how school districts are introducing college and career readiness to these students from the WBL graphic above. One of the many ways is to purchase a career awareness, or "cruising," software that provides students with interaction based modules that address a host of their needs. Some of the needs include career assessments, basic knowledge of careers, college planning, SEL activities, leadership skills development, and a host of other modules. Schools need to take into consideration the costs of some of these software and the overall strategy they feel best fit their students. Keep in mind when considering these software, that EFE districts may already have a version of these softwares available for schools at no cost. Working with your local EFE to utilize one of the software below or adding an additional one as a complement is a possibility that may be worth exploring.

Common Career Awareness and Platforms List:

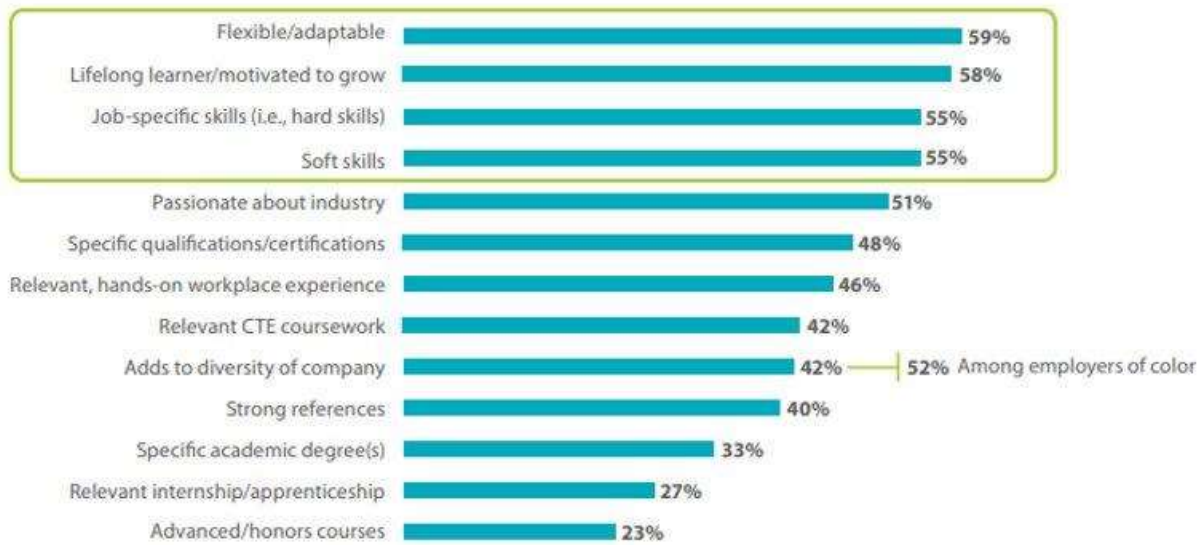
- Xello
- Career Cruising
- Peoplegrove
- Naviance

Certification Type Software for Various WBL training

As students get into the Career Exploration and Workplace Experience part of the continuum, it is important to realize that certain certifications could come into play for different pathways. These certifications may not be cheap and can add up quickly when taking into consideration the cost per pupil. Some considerations to keep in mind related to certifications and related WBL activities include:

1. While certifications can be a great way to address certain technical skills, so can opportunities provided to students through workplace experience including, but not limited to, Student Led and School Based Enterprises.
2. Authentic learning and Project Based Learning can offer a wealth of knowledge in real life situations that are free of cost, unless you need teachers to attend professional development.
3. One thing to keep in mind is that market research has indicated that employers have identified that mastery of the Essential Skills is equally or more valuable for students entering the workforce than certifications. Employers have indicated that if a student comes with mastery of the Essential Skills, that the employer can work with the individual to further master job-specific skills, and this combination of skills increases likelihood of success for the individual.

FIGURE 2.
Most important skills for recent job graduate candidates



[Alternative Text Version \(Source\)](#)

Note: Please understand that the data referenced and the considerations outlined above are not intended to discount the value that certifications may present students entering the workforce in certain career fields.

While the points for consideration listed above are becoming more understood as time passes, it is still important to offer opportunities where certifications align to course work or WBL work experiences that are crucial to local businesses and enterprises. Again, take into consideration the cost of these certifications and understand that most, if not all, certifications can be purchased using Federal Perkins Grant dollars.

Certification examples:

- Human and Public Service - Teacher
 - OSHA Academy School Crisis Planning Certificate
- Health Sciences and Technology
 - Bloodborne Pathogens
 - CPR
- Manufacturing and Engineering, Technology and Trades
 - OSHA 10 or 30

Considerations with Staffing and Scheduling

Staff considerations are always a major concern of districts and schools who want to push their programs to the next level. In order to do this, sometimes schools need to be creative with scheduling and staff release time to offer some flexibility for these student experiences. Schools that are doing this work have become pioneers in looking at creative ways to address these problems, and we will discuss a few of these examples:

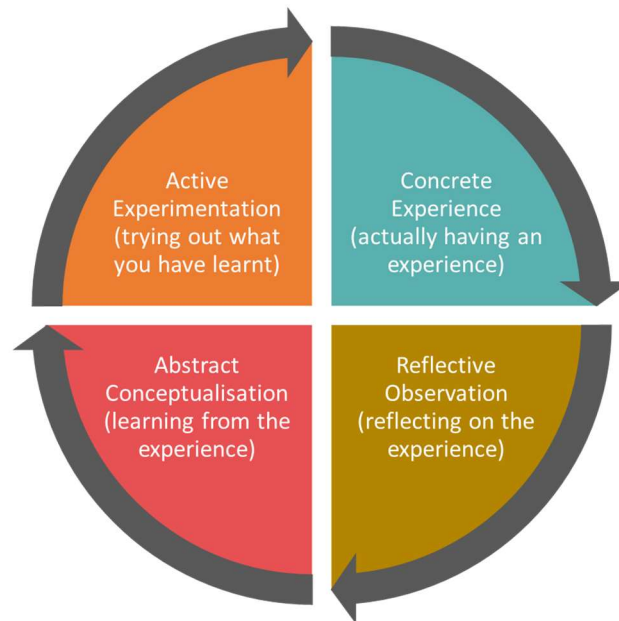
- Teacher release time
- Block scheduling

Teacher/Coordinator Release Time

When students are being placed in clinical experiences, internships or apprenticeships, there are a few options school districts are looking at from a best practices model. The first model is that some school districts are appropriating funds to have full time WBL coordinators who travel throughout the day and meet with students at various sites. Their job requirements often also include other activities like job shadows coordination, site visit coordination, and career fair coordination. Some districts do not have the funding sources to divert these funds so they will need to be more creative. This could mean providing a WBL Coordinator time in the day to address WBL workplace visits in a part-time model. These models can vary across the state depending on the level of programming. It could include a teacher that is in the classroom half the day, and the other half of the day they visit various work sites. It could be an early release or late start time for this teacher, depending on the programming as well. In addition, depending on local collective bargaining agreements, this can be completed as part of plan time as preparation for class or assigned as a duty. No matter the situation, districts will have to determine what system works best for them financially and to offer the best experience for all stakeholders. Realize that, in some cases, teacher/coordinator pay for early release of WBL workplace experiences can utilize various grants.

Block Scheduling

While block scheduling can offer students more time to interact outside of school with transportation needed, or provide an in-school experience that provides a more holistic experience with college and career initiatives, block scheduling (when implemented for specific classes as opposed to school-wide) can add additional costs to the school because it takes those staff members away from other courses/sections that need to be staffed. Some schools are moving away from block scheduling due to the teacher shortages, whereas others are investing more time, energy and money into these opportunities because they recognize that students need this additional time to have a concrete experience, reflect and observe, use abstract conceptualization and active experiment (Kolb's Learning Cycle). Block scheduling has its advantages and disadvantages, but no matter how districts want to implement WBL programs across the state, it is important to recognize that there are not right or wrong answers or dualistic procedures that make one better than the other. Measuring the needs of your community and working with district level administration on the "give and take" of block scheduling should be considered with advisory boards as well as community stakeholders.



Kolb's Learning Cycle (1984)

[Alternative Text Version](#)

Transportation

As discussed in earlier modules, transportation is a costly component of a school budget. Having this barrier often means schools have to pick where they can add programs and if other programs need to be cut. In WBL, it is likely not feasible to place every student into an internship program, clinical experience, or apprenticeship outside of school. Some students benefit from being in a school setting more, and some programs can offer better opportunities at the school building. These issues depend on a lot of factors that are as diverse at Illinois schools, so understanding your local programs is key in order to tackle which programs will offer out of school experiences and which will not.

The State Board of Education recognizes that school budgets are not growing with the legislation passed related to College and Careers or WBL. However, there are creative ways to address this legislation in order to make it implementable. Saving transportation dollars, when possible, is key to the sustainability of WBL in our schools. Utilizing creative ways to partner with outside organizations, utilizing career programs in conjunction with curriculum, and looking at bringing community organizations into the schools can all be cost saving and effective strategies to ensure transportation costs are not an inhibiting factor to your WBL programming.

Transportation and Equity Considerations

Ensuring schools are taking steps to provide transportation during the day to provide equity for their students is one of the key WBL financial decisions that districts should be discussing when implementing WBL programs and WBL Workplace experiences. As most educators know, transportation costs can be significant and can be the single largest barrier to implementing a program. However, there are some creative ways that districts and schools can use to bring about equitable WBL experiences for all students. The Illinois Work-Based Learning Manual shares a few of these ideas and strategies on page twenty four:

“What are Career Development Experiences? A supervised work experience relating to an individual’s career area of interest that should:

- Occur in a workplace or under authentic working conditions, but could include a work simulation project or be offered through a virtual platform. — If a workplace simulation project is necessary, it should still incorporate all other aspects discussed here and mimic an authentic work assignment and real working conditions (e.g., responsibility for adherence to safety protocols, timekeeping, evaluation of work)”

When implementing a Career Development Experience or Workplace Experience, it is important to remember that they can be completed virtually in school or in a simulated environment within the school. Keeping this in mind can help remove barriers when transportation becomes an issue and ensure that we are providing students with equitable access to these experiences.

Student-led and School-based enterprises can also address the transportation funding gaps by keeping students on site, but providing them an opportunity to participate in a real life Work experience. According to the Illinois WBL Manual (pg 30) there are a lot of ways that schools can provide these experiences in house.

Examples of appropriate school-based enterprises could include:

- Information technology help desks
- School stores
- Boutiques
- Agricultural greenhouses
- School apparel shops
- Coffee shops
- Credit unions
- Automotive services
- Childcare programs
- School farms
- Construction projects
- Catering services
- Sign-making and/or printing
- Novelty production
- Embroidery and/or screen printing
- Stores associated with businesses, such as grocery chains and restaurants

CTSOs, Student Led Enterprises, and School Based Enterprises

Anyone who has run a school club, student organization, or after school program realizes that these programs are no longer simple things educators can start up without taking into account, staffing, transportation, financial backing, supplies, etc. Each of the activities listed above has a financial “price tag,” especially when starting a new program. Taking into consideration the amount of time and resources of these should not be underestimated.

Some ways to save money is to not make them be add-ons to the school day. What do we mean by the term “add-on?” When these programs are properly implemented into a WBL Workplace experience or along the WBL learning spectrum, being strategic on where these activities are utilized in the course pathways, along

with integrating the activities directly into the classroom, can often save your staff and students time and money. How so?

Integration of these activities means that students don't need an activity bus to participate, saving on transportation costs alone. Secondly, creating a staff position that is stipend doesn't have to occur when it becomes an expectation of the curriculum. The state realizes that curriculum is always a heavy topic and that curricular changes don't happen overnight. However, take a look at CTE and/or College and Career Pathways to see how student led enterprises, school based enterprises and CTSO activities can enhance your teaching and learning while saving money. Below are a few provided strategies.

Example A) CTSO

Marvel High School has a struggling Business program and the DECA club has never really gained traction as it competes against numerous clubs and sports teams after school. The Business teacher attended a few DECA meetings this year to figure out the programming offered and is utilizing some of the activities to form a DECA Club that runs 1 time of week during the business course. Every Friday, students do work related to DECA activities that coincide with the Business curriculum. Students receive "real-life" experiences as a part of the course and students are talking about taking business classes the following school year. Also, by providing the DECA time during the school day, athletes feel like they can have added opportunities that give them a "leg up" when applying for college.

Example B) School-Based Enterprise

DC High School has had a struggling Horticulture program. There has been talk over the years that the course might be "shelved" due to low enrollment. However, the administration has made it clear that they need more "real-life" programs to prepare students for College and Careers. The teacher, Mr. Robins asks if he can revamp the curriculum to include a school-based enterprise where students raise plants indoors and sell them at a large annual plant sale. Students will learn the entire process of running a business "greenhouse," along with learning the many scientific topics of seed production, germination, soil science, PH levels, and a host of other plant-based biology. The best part is students will get to take home one plant for their family as well as provide seeds and other types of garden tips provided throughout the school year. Supplies are paid for out of the department budget the first year, and sales from spring sale will supplement supplies for the following year.

Example C) School-Based Enterprise

Image High School has a boat load of t-shirt supplies, t-shirt making press, and dryer left from a previous art staff who purchased the equipment with a grant. The equipment has spent a few years sitting in the corner of a classroom with little or no use. The new art teacher, Ms. Spawn, wants to do some more projects with the kids, especially making jewelry, graphic design work and share her love for knitting students. She gets approval from administration to allow students to make different types of items for a new school store featuring artistic designs in them including the products mentioned. The store is staffed at lunch times and students rotate each week on playing salesperson for the store, while others get to work on their art projects. Students love coming down to see the new items, and sales generate revenue for an end of the year art trip featuring a coach bus, luncheon, and visit to a world class museum.

Each of the opportunities above provide "real world" experiences for students to learn both college level standards and career skills that will last a lifetime. They also provide opportunities for various programs to become more financially sound, providing income for school programs to expand. All of them save money

from after school transportation costs and staff “extra pay” stipends that quickly add up. Most importantly, students from all backgrounds get the opportunity to participate and be a part of a course that welcomes them into the world of a new career.

Student Supplies, Uniforms and Tools

General Costs

Financial costs as a part of WBL Workplace experiences can often be offset from employers who provide the training, tools, and materials necessary to create an effective program. Not all employers can offer the same experiences and predicting where costs may occur could save your school from financial risk when discussing the necessary financial commitments, down to the smallest details. Although some schools may default to having students and families cover the cost of associated equipment, it is important that we also focus on equity and ensure that this does not prevent a barrier for students to be able to participate in WBL experiences.

For example, an employer may have an excellent experience for your students to work in a manufacturing environment that allows them an authentic experience in machine tooling. What they forgot to mention is that every student who is on the manufacturing floor will need safety gear. This gear could include glasses, gloves, specific protective equipment or clothes, steel toed boots, etc. How does a program offer these things to students or ensure that students have access to this type of equipment? Some schools will provide it free of charge, others will use grants to purchase the equipment, and others will put in place a lab fee.

While lab fees are expected under certain circumstances, the fees can be a barrier for nontraditional students and students from special populations. At times, your Perkins funding can cover some costs that are not perishable items. For example, if I want to purchase gloves, hard hats, and protective equipment that is used on an annual basis, those materials would be covered. If I wanted to buy work belts that the students got to keep after their experience, the Perkins grant would likely not be a usable source for that item.

Uniforms

Uniforms for certain workplaces can be costly as well. Hospitals, businesses, and a host of other careers have dress codes and expectations that can sometimes hamper participation from low-income individuals. Finding ways to financially support programs and make them self-sustaining are key factors to allow all students to participate. In this situation, school districts often look for in-kind donations from area stakeholders or offer uniforms that have branding from a donor that pays for the supplies and uniform directly. Consider this option when looking to equitably provide uniforms and safety supplies at your WBL workplace experience.

Tools

As mentioned with uniforms, most tools that are being used in a WBL setting or CTE classroom can be purchased with Perkins funds, so long as they are not perishable or one time use. These tools can be things such as hand tools, computer software, childcare supplies to things like heavy equipment, computer stations, 3-d printers and industrial equipment. The “Needs, Wants, Dreams sheet” from module 8.1 is a great starting point on identifying the needs of WBL workplace experience equipment and tools and seeing what funding sources are available for their purchase. Remember to review your purchases and work with your local EFE to address gaps that exist in your local economy, but also provide equitable distribution of tools to varying programs. Each year you budget for your classroom, ensure your CTE director, principal and EFE are on the same page when it comes to supporting your efforts.

Continuous Improvement through Teacher Professional Development

As mentioned earlier in the module, another significant cost for schools can be the professional development sessions, training, and workshops for educators. CTE Perkins grants require that teachers complete continuous professional development on an annual basis. While these professional experiences can look different based on the needs of your teacher or coordinator, it makes sense for schools to develop a professional development plan for your CTE departments and WBL teacher coordinators. Identifying certain needs teachers might want to address with their professional development ideally would occur after receiving their annual evaluation. While timing doesn't always show us grace, it is important for teachers to keep a record of their training, review their materials from frequent training sessions, and continue to innovate in the classroom.

Ways WBL programs can save money are by attending local conferences and travel within the state. This reduces travel and transportation costs when applicable. Otherwise, finding virtual training can be a significant cost savings and allows for teachers to be more flexible where they can work from school and reduce the costs of substitute teachers. Summer trainings, while appearing costly, can actually be financially beneficial because they occur at a time that does not require a substitute teacher; the cost of the substitute teacher during the school year often increases professional development costs (and is sometimes not factored into the overall costs). Some districts have taken a hands-off approach to summer training not taking into account substitute teachers and lost learning time for students.

Work with your local EFE to explore providing various trainings and workshops on Essential Skill implementation into courses, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training, Authentic Learning and Problem Based Learning, New CTE Teacher Support, Team-Based Challenges, PaCE Framework and a host of other relevant topics. These trainings are free, so looking at them and seeing if staff would benefit from these themes could be an easy way for districts to save dollars on professional development throughout the school year. The training can be found on the [P-20 Network Events](#) page as well as on the ISBE CTE Professional Development Calendar. As previously mentioned, your EFE Director can provide you with the most up-to-date version of the ISBE CTE Professional Development Calendar.