

How is Work-Based Learning different from Cooperative Education?

Prior to the 2022-2023 school year, Cooperative Education programs were the method in which students were provided opportunities to develop knowledge and skills through work experience. As Illinois makes the transition to a more comprehensive Work-Based Learning model beginning in the 2022-2023 school year, Workplace Experience Courses (one component of the new Work-Based Learning model) replace Cooperative Education courses. It is extremely important to understand that work-based learning programs are more comprehensive and include a variety of components including career awareness, career exploration, career development experiences, and workplace experience courses. Work-Based Learning programs and varying components are outlined in greater detail in the remainder of this module and will be revisited throughout the professional learning experience.

Although there are similarities between the Cooperative Education programs as we previously knew them and Work-Based Learning Programs as we know them today, there are also significant differences. These differences are a result of the focus on developing more robust Work-Based Learning programs that better meet the needs of students while also aligning with requirements that were a result of legislation in Illinois.

Work-Based Learning programs more clearly align with the requirements of the Postsecondary Workforce Readiness (PWR) Act. Specifically, the Work-Based Learning Continuum that outlines Work-Based Learning within Illinois addresses the PaCE Framework requirements by increasing focus on planning and preparing for a career at an earlier age. This process begins with the career awareness and career exploration activities at the start of the Work-Based Learning Continuum.

By the end of 8th grade	By the end of 9th grade	By the end of 10th grade	By the end of 11th grade	By the end of 12th grade
<p>A student should be supported to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> complete a career cluster survey attend a career exploration day complete a unit on education planning be exposed to a financial literacy unit in a course or workshop <p>A student should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the concept of career clusters of interest relationship between community service/extracurricular activities and postsecondary (PS)/career goals 	<p>A student should be supported to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> revisit career cluster interest survey and take a career interest survey complete an orientation to career clusters attend a PS options workshop meet with a counselor to discuss coursework and PS/career plans using the ISBE College and Career Readiness Indicators begin determining eligibility for advanced placement (AP) courses outline a plan for community service and extracurricular activities related to PS plans complete a financial aid assessment with a family member <p>A student should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> one or two career clusters for further exploration and development the relationship between HS coursework, attendance, and grades to PS plans importance of community service and extracurricular activities to PS and career plans general cost ranges of various PS options 	<p>A student should be supported to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> visit at least one workplace aligned with career interests complete an orientation course to a particular career cluster or cluster grouping select a career pathway (CP) within a career cluster of interest begin determining eligibility for AP courses identify 2-3 adults to support the student through the PS and career selection process review coursework, and PS/career plans in relation to the ISBE College and Career Readiness Indicators (every year) attend a PS affordability workshop with a family member <p>A student should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> educational requirements, cost, expected entry level, and midpoint salary for occupations in selected CP different types of PS credentials and institutions general timing of PS entrance exams and applications benefit of early college credit opportunities to PS access and completion 	<p>A student should be supported to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> revisit the career survey participate in a mock job interview create a resume and personal statement identify an internship opportunity related to the CP determine readiness for college-level coursework in math/ELA and enrollment in either "catch up" or "speed up" course complete or enroll in at least one early college credit opportunity attend a college fair visit at least 3 PS institutions take at least one college entrance exam <p>A student should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> application deadlines, test timing, cost, and preparation for industry-based certification for CP career attributes related to career interests entrance requirements, including application deadlines, for expected PS programs of study 3-5 match schools, one safety, one reach school for PS program of study negative impact of remediation on PS goals financial aid deadlines for chosen PS options 	<p>By 12/31 of 12th grade a student should have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> completed 3 or more admissions applications to PS institutions met with a school counselor to ensure all steps in the PS admissions process are completed on time attended a FAFSA completion workshop completed the FAFSA <p>By the end of 12th grade a student should be supported to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> address any remedial needs in math/ELA obtain an internship opportunity related to the CP if applicable, receive industry-based certification(s) related to the CP complete one or more team-based challenges or projects related to the CP attend a financial aid award letter workshop <p>A student should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how CP courses and experiences articulate to degree programs at PS options estimated cost of each PS option affordability of PS options in relation to expected entry-level career salary and anticipated debt terms and conditions of any scholarship or loan

Work-Based Learning Programs also align with the Professional Learning requirements of the College and Career Pathway Endorsements outlined in the PWR Act. As outlined previously in this module, Work-Based Learning programs have various components to address the specific needs of the student. In some cases, this will be a Workplace Experience course that allows a student to take a semester or year long credit bearing course focused on skill development learned through a combination of classroom learning and authentic work experiences (similar, in ways, to the previous cooperative education courses). However, in other cases, a Work-Based Learning program may be providing students with Career Development Experience opportunities to meet the Professional Learning experiences requirements as part of the College and Career Pathway Endorsements.

It is important to note that Work-Based Learning programs provide a structure that allow students to gain specific learning opportunities focused on developing and demonstrating mastery of the Cross-Sector Essential Employability Skills (Essential Skills) and Technical Competencies related to their Career Pathway of interest. Both the Essential Skills and Technical Competencies will be outlined in greater detail later in this module.

See the table below from the [ISBE Work Based Learning Manual](#) for a comparison of Cooperative Education Courses, Workplace Experience Courses, and Career Development Experiences.

Table 2 – Summary and comparison of Cooperative Education – Workplace Experience – Career Development Experience

	Cooperative Education (<SY22)	Workplace Experience (WPE) Courses (SY22>)	Career Development Experience (CDE)
Suggested Grade Level	Subject to labor laws (see Rules Part 254, Section 254.1160)	Typically 12th grade; ideally should have completed coursework within program	Subject to labor laws; ideally should have completed some coursework within program
Compensation	Paid placement	Paid or unpaid	Paid or unpaid; must provide pay and/or credit
Location	In person, on-site	In person, virtual, or simulated	In person or authentic working conditions
Program of study	Should be related	Must be related to program and/or career goal	Should be related
Coding	Generic code for all students	Specialized Group 5 code to reflect student's program or cluster area	Not necessarily a specific course; if so not necessarily reflecting program area
Coursework requirement	Parallel or alternating, credited course. 200 minutes per week for full year.	Parallel, meeting weekly; credited course	Not a specific course but must provide credit and/or compensation
Individual learning plan	Should have Individual student learning plan	Must have individual student learning plan	Should have Individual student learning plan
Teacher-Coordinator requirement	CTE or AFNR1 Educator with six semester credit hours WPE coursework	CTE or AFNR1 Educator with six semester credit hours WPE coursework	(WPE applies if it is a course); may be overseen by qualified school counselor or coordinator
Industry partner input	Partners for placement only	Collaboration on activities	At least one partner codevelops curriculum
Assessment	Yes, professional skills	Yes, professional skills	Yes, professional skills
Work Experience Time requirement	At least 75 hours to earn credit	At least 60 hours cumulative	At least 60 hours cumulative
College & Career Readiness Indicator (CCRI)	May have satisfied, depending on characteristics of course (see CDE)	May satisfy, depending on characteristics of course (see CDE)	Upon completion, satisfies one indicator
Pathway Endorsement	May have satisfied, depending on characteristics of course (see CDE)	May satisfy, depending on characteristics of course (see CDE)	One component of PE