

State Board of Education Guidelines and Practices

The following guidelines and practices from ISBE will be covered in great detail in module 7.3:

- Regulations regarding WBL Workplace Experience Courses based on ISBE Administrative Code 256.165
- WBL Workplace Experience Course Recommendations for Districts
 - Illinois Personnel File - WBL Training, Sexual Harassment and Agreement
 - Sexual Harassment Guidelines
 - Safety Guidelines

[ISBE Administrative Code 256.165](#)

The following rules and regulations are subject to ISBE's CTE Coursework and may change based on future legislation. Please recognize that WBL learning initiatives are a large umbrella that include Career and Technical Education components. However, not all Illinois WBL initiatives are under the jurisdiction of CTE and may live outside of these rules. For example, school districts may have Work Based Learning Workplace Experiences for programs in METT, without an official CTE comprehensive instructional program (CIP) in METT. In this case (as in most cases), it is required that a certified work-based learning educator oversee the workplace experience for the student.

In whatever case, we recommend adhering to these rules as a best practice whether your Workplace Experience Course is under direct CTE programming guidelines or not.

The following information is directly from ISBE Administrative Code 256.165 outlining Additional Program Components for Workplace Learning Programs. Please review this information in detail.

“In addition to the other requirements of this Part, applications for funding that include workplace experience coursework programs and activities must:

1. include a practicum work experience related to the student's path of study, totaling no less than 60 hours per semester, that is a component of a student's individualized program of study designed to meet specific career goals
2. include direct instruction on technical and essential employability skills and content relevant to students' specific employment; and

3. not have age restrictions for a student's eligibility into that program, other than those required by State and federal laws and regulations.

Workplace Learning CTE Coursework

1. The workplace learning CTE coursework is not bound by, and may occur outside of, the regular school day or calendar for participation or completion of practicum or direct instruction.
2. The workplace learning CTE coursework must include related instruction taught by a qualified educator-coordinator and must be provided to each student enrolled in the program. The related instruction must incorporate technical and essential employability skills and specific topics related to the particular employment of students.
3. At a minimum, the education coursework as part of workplace learning must include at least one synchronous meeting per week of all enrolled students or cohorts of students in similar career pathways to be led by the educator-coordinator that is responsive to the workplace experiences and employability skill development.
4. The workplace learning CTE coursework must include work experience, either paid or unpaid, that supports a student's individualized program of study. This practicum must comply with the following:
 - The practicum must be supervised by one or more qualified educator-coordinators, with applicable State Board credentials, who must conduct the following:
 - at least one direct supervision workplace visit for each student during the semester;
 - direct and indirect supervisory activities on a weekly basis for the duration of the workplace placement; and
 - at least one formal evaluation of the student by the conclusion of the workplace placement.
 - The district must provide the educator-coordinator with course release time granted for direct supervision of students that:
 - is, at a minimum, 30 minutes for each unique workplace where students are placed; or

- variance from the 30-minute minimum per unique workplace is allowed with a State Board-approved waiver.
- In addition to technical and essential employability skills, the workplace experience shall include focused skill development, in areas relevant to the student's individualized program of study and career goals, that includes:
 - school credit for the skill development
 - permissible activity for individuals of the particular age at which the student is engaged or employed under federal and State law
 - potential compensation for student learners that is in compliance with federal, State and local laws and regulations and that is conducted in a manner that does not result in the exploitation of the student learner for private gain
 - a requirement that other workers who ordinarily perform the work are not displaced; and
 - under the terms of a written placement agreement between the eligible recipient and the employer, incorporation of a placement plan developed for each student learner and that includes, at a minimum, verified tasks for the occupational and employability skills; duration of course of training; working hours; date of birth; company name; responsibilities of the employer, coordinator, students and parents; and signatures of the employer, coordinator, student and parent.
 - Note: Collection and documentation of these items can be accomplished through the use of the stakeholder agreements and the student's workplace training plan previously discussed in this course.
- The number of students supervised by an educator-coordinator shall be subject to maximum thresholds designated by local district policy, with the consent of the appropriate CTE local or regional advisory committee.
- Eligibility for student participation in workplace CTE coursework shall be subject to applicable State and federal employment and labor laws and regulations.

The eligible recipient shall establish procedures for cooperation with employment agencies, labor groups, employers, and other community agencies in identifying suitable placement partners for persons enrolled in the workplace learning program.

WBL Workplace Experience Course Recommendations for Districts

The following are other considerations to take into account when implementing WBL Workplace Experience Courses in your district or school.

1. Potential compensation for student learners that is in compliance with federal, State and local laws and regulations and that is conducted in a manner that does not result in the exploitation of the student learner for private gain should be considered.
2. Educator-Coordination should have fulfilled their requirement to enroll and pass a state sanctioned WBL coursework prior to teaching in WBL Workplace Experience courses. As of right now, these courses are often two three credit courses that fulfill the state requirement:
 - Note: This WBL online course you are currently enrolled in is being offered as an alternative to the 6 credits of graduate credits in the examples above. This course meets the requirement without providing college credit.
3. School districts administering a Workplace Experience program should maintain the following records:
 - a proof-of-age certificate or work permit when required by law, and individual training agreements incorporating a training plan for each student employed
 - records of the follow-up of students who have completed or left the program,
 - class records of the related course provided as a part of the program,
4. Student personnel records could include information on their employment in WBL settings and documentation of any legal documents including, but not limited to:
 - Training and Safety guidelines
 - Sexual Harassment training
 - WBL Expectations
 - Stakeholder Agreements

Illinois Personnel File - WBL Training, Sexual Harassment and Agreement

The NIU Illinois CTE Project Team developed this document, the [Illinois Personnel File - WBL Training, Sexual Harassment and Agreement](#), in order for districts to have a resource that could help documents required information of WBL programs while enhancing WBL experiences for all stakeholders involved. This document was developed based on best practices in CTE WBL Workplace Experiences where students will be interacting with employers in a program. The document can be used with staff to create tracking procedures in schools around WBL. It also provides critical information to staff, students, parents and community organizations participating in WBL.

The document has a basic contact section that covers both the student and parent information in case of an emergency, but also for records keeping purposes. It also collects the information of the community organization that is participating in the WBL experience.

As you go further into the document, it provides a schedule for the student and parents with a section that shows the type of WBL experience. If the work is paid, be sure to mark that along with other coordinating experiences that are occurring. Mark “Internship” if the work is unpaid. You may mark other experiences if they overlap with each other. This document correctly shows the parent and guardians that the work is either paid or unpaid.

You will see that the document also has a signature section where each person signs off on the agreement so that they are aware of the expectations of the WBL Workplace Experience. Keeping this on record at the district office, along with providing copies of the agreement to the employer and parents ensures that all information is shared and accounted for in the event questions arise. This information also provides that workers compensation and liability coverage have been secured prior to the student placement in a WBL Workplace setting.

The final section allows for the district to place any information on safety and sexual harassment procedures based on their own district policies. Having these in the document makes it clear that these two topics are covered prior to placement. It also ensures all parties are in agreement on these strategies. The training section provides a tracking mechanism for teacher/coordinator, students, parents and the community organization to track the process.

*This document is not a mandatory document; however, we felt it would be something of great value to the parties involved and would encourage collaboration down the road on other necessary components. In addition, using this document, in conjunction with previously outlined stakeholder agreements, will help ensure all the documentation requirements outlined in this module are fully met.

Sexual Harassment Procedures

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when submission to or rejection of this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Sexual harassment can occur in a variety of circumstances, including but not limited to the following:

- The victim as well as the harasser may be a woman or a man. The victim does not have to be of the opposite sex.
- The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, an agent of the employer, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, or a non-employee.
- The victim does not have to be the person harassed but could be anyone affected by the offensive conduct.

Unlawful sexual harassment may occur without economic injury to or discharge of the victim. The harasser's conduct must be unwelcome. It is helpful for the victim to directly inform the harasser that the conduct is unwelcome and must stop. The victim should use any employer complaint mechanism or grievance system available. Also, make it known that students are expected to act in the best interest of the school and program, and that students violating the school code of conduct/workplace code regarding Sexual harassment will not be tolerated.

Make it clear to students that your district/school needs to hear from them if they are experiencing any inappropriate behavior at work, sexual or not. Teachers and educators are Mandated Reporters and must report any abuse activities in WBL to the Illinois Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873). After reporting the incident, be sure to contact the district administrator to report the incident as well.

The Mandated Reporter Law states...

The alleged perpetrator is a parent, guardian, foster parent, relative caregiver, paramour, any individual residing in the same home, **any person responsible for the child's welfare at the time of the alleged abuse or neglect**, or any person who came to know the child through an official capacity or position of trust (for example: health care professionals, educational personnel, recreational supervisors, members of the clergy, volunteers or support personnel) in settings where children may be subject to abuse and neglect. The [Illinois Sexual Harassment & Discrimination Helpline \("SHD Helpline"\) and Sexual](#)

[Harassment & Discrimination Helpline Website](#) is a resource that students can utilize to self report the incident as well on their own.

When investigating allegations of sexual harassment, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission looks at the whole record: the circumstances, such as the nature of the sexual advances, and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. A determination on the allegations are made from the facts on a case-by-case basis.

Prevention is the best tool to eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace. Employers are encouraged to take steps necessary to prevent sexual harassment from occurring. They should clearly communicate to employees that sexual harassment will not be tolerated. They can do so by establishing an effective complaint or grievance process and taking immediate and appropriate action when an employee files a complaint. One must be especially vigilant of student and employer performance in Workplace Experience work stations. Student placement in nontraditional occupational areas is increasing and this development increases the potential for harassment.

Safety Guidelines

Students should fulfill safety training with their worksite community organization as part of the Workplace Experience. Going over the expectations with the employer prior to the formal agreement are key because it lets the student, parents, teacher/coordinator and community organization involved all know the importance of safety in workplace settings. Illinois prides itself on having strong labor guidelines, procedures and safety mechanisms in collaboration with the Illinois Department of Labor, OSHA, Labor unions and a host of other organizations. Districts should develop a short guide of safety guidelines they expect students to adhere to in collaboration with their community partners. These can be developed with advisory groups and district personnel and should be reviewed by the administrative team and/or legal department.

Sharing a copy of these guidelines with students and parents ensures that the student is aware of these principles prior to stepping foot in a WBL setting. Keeping a copy in the students training personnel file holds them accountable to the work. It also shows that the district has a record of the training and contacts of all training procedures.

