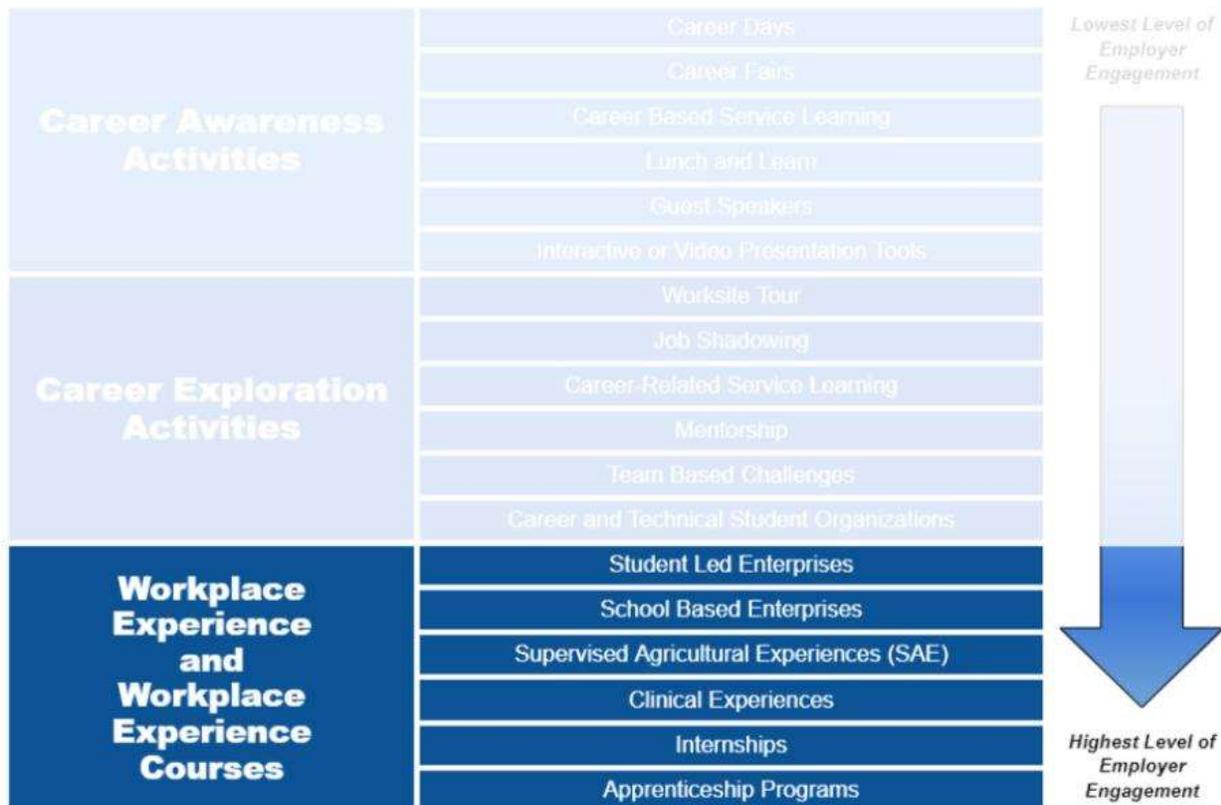


# Workplace Experience and Workplace Experience Courses



[Alternative Text Version](#)

Defining a Career Development Experience

A Career Development Experience is 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).
- Be co-developed by an education provider and at least one employer in the relevant field.
- Provide compensation OR educational credit (or both) to the participant.

- Reinforce foundational professional skills, including, at a minimum, those outlined in the Essential Employability Skills framework.
- Include a Professional Skills Assessment and be utilized as a participant feedback tool.
- Take place for a minimum of 60 total cumulative hours.

## **Workplace Experience Courses Overview**

### *Definition*

These workplace experiences should align to the expectations of a Career Development Experience as defined by the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act. These courses help students meet the criteria for College and Career Readiness Indicators (CCRI), which are data points that help determine a student's progress and identify adjustments needed toward postsecondary and/or career success.

Types of workplace experiences include:

- Student-Led Enterprises
- School-Based Enterprises
- Immersion Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAE)
- Clinical Experiences in Health Science and Technology Programs
- Internships
- Apprenticeship Programs, including Youth Apprenticeships, Pre-apprenticeships, and Registered Apprenticeships

These courses are not necessarily bound by the regular school day or calendar for participation or completion and do not have age restrictions for eligibility, other than those that are directly prohibited by state and federal laws and regulations. For information about the distinction between traditional Cooperative Education courses, Workplace Experience courses, and Career Development experiences view the [Summary and Comparison of Cooperative Education - Workplace Experience - Career Development Experience Table](#) from the ISBE Work-Place Learning Manual.



Components of a Quality Work-Based Experience Courses

The associated Workplace Experience coursework should include:

- A practicum component with direct or simulated workplace experience that is aligned to each student’s individualized program of study and designed to meet their specific career goals.
- Direct instruction by an approved educator-coordinator on essential and technical employability skills in a virtual or classroom setting.
- Compensation via pay and/or academic credit to the student for their work.
- An individual student plan.
- A Professional Skills Assessment

Direct Instruction

The CTE coursework shall include related instruction taught by a qualified educator-coordinator who meets the qualifications established by the ISBE CTE and Innovation Department and provided to each student enrolled in the program. This direct instruction incorporates essential and technical employability skills as well as specific topics related to the particular employment of each of the students enrolled. In addition to the practicum experience, the Workplace Experience coursework shall include at least one synchronous meeting per week of all enrolled students to be led by the educator-coordinator. All participants have an opportunity to discuss relevant topics as they relate to the workplace experiences and employability skill development.

### Practicum Work Experience

The CTE Workplace Experience coursework should also include at least sixty hours of paid or unpaid work experience, either in-person, virtually, or simulated. This experience should directly support a student's individualized program of study.

1. The workplace experience should be supervised by one or more qualified educator-coordinators to provide, at a minimum, at least one direct supervision workplace visit for each student.
2. The educator-coordinator should collaborate with the workplace supervisor to conduct direct and indirect supervisory activities on a weekly basis for the duration of the workplace placement.
3. The workplace experience should provide a minimum of 30 minutes per unique workplace where students are placed per week of course release time for the coordinator (with the option for an ISBE-approved waiver).
4. The work experience shall include focused skill development in areas relevant to the student's individualized program of study and career goals in addition to essential and technical employability skills.
  1. A student will earn school credit.
  2. This is a permissible activity for individuals of the particular age at which the student is engaged or employed under federal and state law.
  3. Student learners may be compensated in conformity with federal, state, and local laws and regulations and in a manner not resulting in exploitation of the student learner for private gain.
  4. The student's work experience will not displace other workers who ordinarily perform the work.
  5. The work experience, under the terms of a written placement agreement between the eligible recipient and the employer, incorporates a placement plan that has been developed for each student learner and that includes, at a minimum, verified tasks that align to the occupational and employability skills of the student; duration of course of training; working hours; date of student's birth; company name; responsibilities of the employer, coordinator, student, and parents, and their signatures.
5. 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.
6. Eligibility for student participation in workplace career and technical education coursework shall be subject to applicable state and federal employment and labor laws and regulations.
7. The eligible recipient shall establish procedures for cooperation with employment agencies, labor groups, employers, and other community agencies in identifying suitable placement partners for people enrolled in the work-based learning CTE program.

## Student Led Enterprises

Suggested Grade Levels	11-12
Suggested Duration	One-semester or two-semester course.
Pay	Yes (and/or credit) These experiences must be conducted in compliance with federal and state labor laws. (See U.S. Department of Labor, Employment Standards Administration, Wage and Hour Division.)
Credit	Yes. Aligned to the appropriate Workplace Experience course.
Related Classroom Instruction	Yes, with professional skills assessment feedback.
WBL Coordinator Qualifications	Direct Instruction of all Workplace Experience courses must be taught by a qualified educator-coordinator as outlined in this manual, Section 3: Qualifications of Educator-Coordinators.
Student Eligibility	Direct Instruction of all Workplace Experience courses must be taught by a qualified educator-coordinator as outlined in this manual, Section 3: Qualifications of Educator-Coordinators.

[Alternative Text Version](#)

### Definition

Student-led enterprises are a type of Career Development Experience in which voluntarily formed groups join together to raise awareness about an entrepreneurial activity. They support and engage in such activity to introduce learners to the possibility of different pathways into employment, such as entrepreneurialism. In this model, entrepreneurs and industry experts serve as volunteer coaches and mentors who guide student teams through the processes of developing hypotheses about a business concept, testing those hypotheses, adapting them, and continually learning and improving. Students can work remotely from the classroom. These activities will produce a good or service that may be sold or provided to others. Participants might build websites, create digital multimedia presentations, develop social media platforms, or perform various other tasks related to the entrepreneurial activity. Participants define the opportunity and create solutions. The project is tied to a course that supports entrepreneurial activity. It would typically be completed over a specified period, as the creation of the enterprise is part of the experience.

There are no specific prerequisites to an entrepreneurship experience, but students who have already participated in some career awareness activities and have a genuine interest in owning their own business would benefit most from entrepreneurship. As with other Work-Based Learning activities, the content and expectations should reflect each student’s need for additional information about specific careers.

### Rationale

Student led enterprises provide opportunities for students to gain extensive work-based experiences with a focus in entrepreneurial activities. These models are suitable for most districts, including those that lack sufficient local industry partners for internship placements or similar activities.

*The opportunities to develop a student-led enterprise are seemingly limitless.*

Student-led enterprises provide opportunities for students to build entrepreneurial skills and network with both entrepreneurs and local community partners. These enterprises offer the opportunity to apply academic skills, develop hands-on skills and meaningful employability skills that are needed in today’s

workplace. Students develop a deeper understanding of market analysis, management, and economic impacts of industry. Students can rotate between various positions and gain experience in all aspects of the business that could incorporate programs from a multitude of career clusters.

### School Based Enterprises

Suggested Grade Levels	9-12
Duration	Aligned with course duration.
Pay	School-based enterprises may be paid or unpaid with academic credit. Paid experiences must be conducted in compliance with federal and state labor laws.
Credit	Yes. Aligned with appropriate Workplace Experience course(s), including professional skills assessment.
Related Classroom Instruction	Yes
WBL Coordinator Qualifications	Direct instruction of all Workplace Experience courses must be taught by a qualified educator-coordinator as outlined in this manual, Section 3: Qualifications of Educator-Coordinators.
Student Eligibility	There are no specific prerequisites to a school-based enterprise experience, but students who have already participated in some career awareness activities would benefit most from participating in a school-based enterprise. As with other WBL activities, the content and expectations should reflect each student's need for additional information about specific careers.

[Alternative Text Version](#)

#### Definition

A school-based enterprise is a type of Career Development Experience that involves a simulated or actual business conducted within a school. It is designed to replicate a specific business or segment of an industry and assist students in acquiring work experience related to their chosen career cluster. School-based enterprises provide goods/services to meet the needs of the market and are managed and operated by students as hands-on learning laboratories integrating common standards in marketing, finance, hospitality, or management.

#### Rationale

A district or area career center might consider offering a school-based enterprise when a community lacks sufficient businesses and industry partnerships to provide opportunities for students to gain extensive work based experiences in the private sector.

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
- Child care 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.

*The opportunities to develop a school-based enterprise are seemingly limitless.*

School-based enterprises provide opportunities for students to explore various work experiences and interactions with local community partners. These enterprises offer the opportunity to develop hands-on skills and meaningful employability skills that are needed in today's workplace. Students can rotate between various positions and gain experience in all aspects of the business that could incorporate programs from a multitude of career clusters.

School-based enterprises provide students opportunities for:

- Real-world applications of academic skills.
- Practical workplace experience that leads to enhancement of basic employability skills, such as teamwork, leadership, interpersonal communication, as well as a deeper understanding of technological applications in business and a more meaningful understanding of economic impacts of industry.

#### Steps for Planning a School-Based Enterprise

Planning of a school-based enterprise must be completed in collaboration with the school administration. This is the most important phase of any enterprise to its overall success. Time spent planning can save major headaches down the road.

1. Staff, students, and administrators must come to an agreement on which business/industry the school based enterprise will be focused on.
2. Set policies and procedures for the development, implementation, and maintenance of the school-based enterprise.
3. Collaborate with relevant career program staff to incorporate the work into various program pathways and align the activities to the needs of students in those pathways.
4. Identify a location of operation for the enterprise.
5. Determine the appropriate layout for the workspace
6. Develop partnerships that may lead to funding and/or sponsorship for advisory input, needed supplies and materials by working with administrators and the business community.
7. Identify and procure the appropriate supplies and materials for operation.
8. Recruit and train the appropriate student workers to fill the necessary positions.
9. Establish financial policies and guidelines.
10. Determine the logistical requirements of the industry, such as how goods or services will be delivered.
11. Develop a marketing campaign to inform consumers (e.g., students, staff, community) of the goods and services available.
12. Organize a grand opening of the new "business" to create excitement and awareness of the enterprise.

The development of the business plan and financial policies should be documented in writing and approved by the appropriate CTE and/or district administrators. If working in collaboration with an external business partner, the plan should generally align with that of the business serving as the model.

Market Research and Analysis

An appropriate market analysis should also be conducted to determine the needs of customers and communities. This analysis should include information about existing competitors, consumer demand, the necessary investments needed to provide a good or service, and the labor that would be required to conduct the enterprise.

Initial steps should be to create a list of all the equipment and materials necessary for manufacturing and/or delivery of goods and services. After the total cost is determined, students and staff should work to set a price that is both competitive and profitable.

This analysis should be included in the business plan, which will serve as the blueprint for the business, and should include a mission statement, business goals, anticipated timeline, staffing requirements and requisite training, and cost and profit estimates.

Prior to implementation, present the business plan to administration and the relevant board attorney for approval and recommendations.

**Supervised Agriculture Experience (SAE)**

Suggested Grade Levels	9-12
Duration	Aligned with course duration and varies depending on program model.
Pay	School-based enterprises may be paid or unpaid. Paid experiences must be conducted in compliance with federal and state labor laws.
Credit	Yes. Aligned with appropriate Workplace Experience course(s).
Related Classroom Instruction	Yes, with Professional Skills Assessment feedback.
WBL Coordinator Qualifications	Direct Instruction of all Workplace Experience courses must be taught by a qualified educator-coordinator as outlined in this manual, Section 3: Qualifications of Educator-Coordinators.
Student Eligibility	there are no specific prerequisites to an immersion supervised agricultural experience (SAE), but students who have already participated in some career awareness activities would benefit most from participating in an immersion SAE. As with other WBL activities, the content and expectations should reflect each student's need for additional information about specific careers.

[Alternative Text Version](#)

Definition

Supervised agricultural experiences are a type of Career Development Experience that are an integral component of academic coursework. They extend beyond the classroom and into the community. Participants are provided opportunities to apply academic and occupational skills in the workplace or a simulated workplace environment. Depending on the activities associated with the supervised agricultural experience, the SAE can be categorized as either a “foundational SAE” or an “immersion SAE.” Immersion



SAEs should be categorized as a Workplace Experience. The National Council for Agricultural Education provides the following guidance for each:

- Foundational SAE
  - Career exploration and planning
  - Personal financial planning and management
  - Workplace safety
  - Employability skills for college and career readiness
  - Agricultural literacy
- Immersion SAE
  - Entrepreneurship/ownership
  - Placement/internships
  - Research (experimental, analytical, invention)
  - School business enterprises
  - Service learning

The immersion SAEs correspond to ISBE’s Workplace Experiences as indicated below:

ISBE Workplace Experience	Immersion SAE
Student-Led Enterprise	Ownership/Entrepreneurship
Internship	Placement/Internship
Mentorship/Research Internship	Research
School-Based Enterprise	School-Based Enterprise
Service Learning	Service Learning

[Alternative Text Version](#)

## Clinical Experiences

Suggested Grades	11-12
Types of Clinical Experiences	Clinical experiences vary depending on what health science/health care program students are taking and should be coordinated with a licensed and accredited health care facility. Clinical experiences are possible in each of the state-approved Health Sciences and Technology Programs, but the most common include: Emergency medical technician Medical assistant Nurse aide Pharmacy technician Physical therapy aide
Pay	None
Credit	Yes. Aligned to appropriate Workplace Experience course.
Rules and Regulations	Rules and regulations for each type may vary.
WBL Coordinator Qualifications	Direct Instruction of all Workplace Experience courses must be taught by a qualified educator-coordinator as outlined in this manual, Section 3: Qualifications of Educator-Coordinators. A nurse aide clinical instructor must also meet the requirements of 77 Illinois Administrative Code Part 395 Long-Term Care Assistants and Aides Training Programs, Section 395.160 Instructor Requirements (Basic Nurse Assistant Training Program only).

[Alternative Text Version](#)

***Definition***

The definition and characteristics of a clinical experience varies depending on the related occupation, but typically is associated with programs in the health professions. The experience is an application of academic and hands-on skills learned in the classroom in a real-work setting, most often at an off-campus healthcare institution. These clinical experiences are usually a required component of professional certification or licensure. Placement may be subject to health screenings, age, or other restrictions.

## Internships

Suggested Grade Levels	11-12
Suggested Duration	Internships should last for six weeks or longer and average 10-20 hours per week.
Pay	Internship experiences may be paid or unpaid.
Credit	Yes. Aligned to the appropriate Workplace Experience course.
Related Classroom Instruction	Yes
Regulations	Paid internship experiences must be conducted in compliance with federal and state labor laws. Federal legislation provides for determination as to whether interns must be paid by the minimum wage and overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) for the services that they provide to private sector for-profit employers. Educators must meet the "Test for Unpaid Interns and Students" (seven criteria) if they are placing students in unpaid internships. Otherwise, the students must follow the FLSA for paid internships.
WBL Coordinator Qualifications	Direct Instruction of all Workplace Experience courses must be taught by a qualified educator-coordinator as outlined in this manual, Section 3: Qualifications of Educator-Coordinators.
Student Eligibility	The student must be enrolled or planning to enroll in a CTE program. There are no state-mandated student eligibility requirements for internships. Consider the following prior to placement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful completion of career inventory and exploration activities.</li> <li>• Relevant work experience (e.g., job shadow, part-time job).</li> <li>• Recommendation from classroom teacher or counselor.</li> <li>• Minimum attendance and/or grade point average.</li> <li>• Possess acceptable workplace readiness skills.</li> <li>• Completion of application and interview process with host employer.</li> <li>• Completion of student registration and parent/guardian permission.</li> <li>• Ability to fulfill the time demands of the internship.</li> </ul>

[Alternative Text Version](#)

### Definition

A student internship is a type of Career Development Experience for high school students who have completed extensive school-based preparation relating to an identified area of career and academic interest in the Individual Learning Plan. Internships are usually one-time experiences that should lead to course credit and could be paid or unpaid. It is connected to classroom learning and accompanied by structured reflection activities. Students participating in internships should be guided by a formal, written training plan that defines specific academic and workplace skills to be mastered.

### Research Internship

In addition to standard work placement internships, there are also research internships that provide employability and industry-relevant experience. Participants are hired for specific tasks within an established project. They receive basic training in research skills and data collection methods and can be incorporated in all aspects of research, providing for greater decision-making authority and leadership development.

### Planning an Internship

Successful internships require collaboration, communication, and preparation by many school and community stakeholders. The following recommendations should be considered when developing an internship model for a school:

1. Convene the stakeholders needed to assist with implementing internships (e.g., employers, members of professional associations such as chambers of commerce, school administrators, teachers, counselors, career advisers, and Work-Based Learning coordinators).
2. Determine the scope and structure of the internship program, including policies that will govern student selection and intern supervision.
3. Assess students' career interests and eligibility to identify potential interns and target potential employers.
4. Cultivate relationships with employers to host internships and work with them to structure internships that will benefit students, employers, and workplace supervisors.
5. Facilitate employers' interviews of student candidates for internships and allow the employers to make the final selections.
6. Prepare students for their internships through student and parent/guardian orientation and the development of training agreements and plans.
7. Develop an internship training agreement.
8. Ensure that adequate supervision is provided during the internships. Examples include workplace visits, employer evaluations, or regular communication with employers and students.
9. Ensure legal requirements are met, including identifying all safety requirements in the work environment.
10. Provide for structured student reflection, both individual and group, before, during, and after internship Experiences.
11. Give recognition to participating stakeholders, with emphasis on the host employers and students.
12. Promote the internship program to area business and industry partners (employers) parents/guardians, school administrators, students, and advisory groups.

## Apprenticeship Programs

Suggested Grades	11-12
Number of hours required	Depends on apprenticeship model used. The apprenticeship program may be part time or full time. Part-time employment and the hours worked will be determined by the employer. All work hours will be documented or tracked by the employer and will also be credited toward the completion of a Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP).
Pay	Pay should be at least the federal minimum wage and based on a progressive wage schedule.
Credit	Yes. Aligned to the appropriate Workplace Experience course.
Related Technical Instruction (RTI)	RTI must be occupation-specific. RTI is given in high school CTE programs also counts toward RTI requirements for a RAP. RTI is taken simultaneously with academic classes to meet high school graduation requirements.
WBL Coordinator	Direct Instruction of all Workplace Experience courses must be taught by a qualified educator-coordinator as outlined in this manual, Section 3: Qualifications of Educator-Coordinators
Student Eligibility	Each student must be at least 16 years old, be in good standing with the school, be enrolled in a CTE program that supports the occupation, and maintain passing grades and satisfactory attendance. Youth Registered Apprenticeship (YRA) participation will be canceled if the student leaves the school. Each YRA employer may have additional criteria depending on the hours or skill set required.
Objectives	<p>The student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain employability and occupational skills.</li> <li>• Develop technical knowledge and skills necessary for a specific occupation through on-the-job training and RTI.</li> <li>• Strengthen career awareness; workplace readiness skills; and personal development, including learning workplace protocols and etiquette.</li> <li>• Receive employment experience and foster essential communication skills, workplace protocols, and etiquette.</li> <li>• Gain work experience.</li> <li>• Earn a nationally recognized credential.</li> </ul>

[Alternative Text Version](#)

### Definition

Apprenticeships have five components:

1. Employer involvement
2. Structured on-the-job training with a mentor
3. Related training and instruction
4. Progressive wage increases as skills increase
5. Nationally recognized credential(s)

There are three types of apprenticeship:

- Time-based: The apprentice’s progress is measured by the number of hours spent on the job and in the classroom.
- Competency-based: The apprentice’s progress is measured by his or her ability to demonstrate the application of relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities.

- Hybrid: The apprentice's progress is measured through a combination of hours spent in the program and competencies demonstrated in the workplace.

### Youth Apprenticeships

Youth apprenticeships are defined in the Career Pathways Dictionary as programs for youth (ages 16 to 24) currently enrolled in secondary education or pursuing a high school equivalency, including those with disabilities, that include, at minimum, the following:

1. A total of 450 hours of paid on-the-job training under the supervision of a mentor;
2. At least two semesters of related instruction that ideally counts toward a high school and/or postsecondary credential, but minimally leading to an industry credential;
3. Ongoing and a final assessment measuring success in mastering skill standards;
4. Career exploration in which participants learn about several positions at the company and in the field; and
5. Wraparound supports (e.g., case management and counseling) and holistic upskilling (e.g., Technical skills and Essential skills).

Upon successful completion of the program, participants are supported to apply for one or more of the following: entry-level employment, admission to a Registered Apprenticeship or Non-Registered Apprenticeship Program, or admission to other articulated postsecondary education options (including two- and four-year programs).

Youth Apprenticeships provide the foundation for students to choose among multiple pathways after high school, including enrolling in college, entering an apprenticeship program, beginning full-time employment, or a combination. A group of employers that are representative of an industry (including small, medium, and large firms) in which an industry credential does not yet exist should determine the critical core competencies that participants should learn through the apprenticeship and agree to a formal process for recognizing mastery of those competencies.

### Pre-Apprenticeships

A program that has a documented partnership with an employer and is designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a Registered Apprenticeship or Non-Registered Apprenticeship includes all of the following:

- Training and curriculum that align with the skill needs of employers in the economy of the state or region and that have been designed to prepare participants to meet the minimum entry-level requirements of the apprenticeship.
- Access to educational and career counseling and other supportive services, as needed by participants.
- Hands-on meaningful learning activities that are connected to education and training activities, such as career exploration and Career Development Experiences, and that reinforce foundational professional skills, including, at a minimum, those outlined in the Essential Employability Skills framework, linked below.
- Participants who successfully complete the program are supported to apply for a Registered Apprenticeship or Non-Registered Apprenticeship Program and may receive preference for enrollment.