Work-Based Learning: It's More Than Just a Job

EMPLOYMENT FIRST
MASSACHUSETTS

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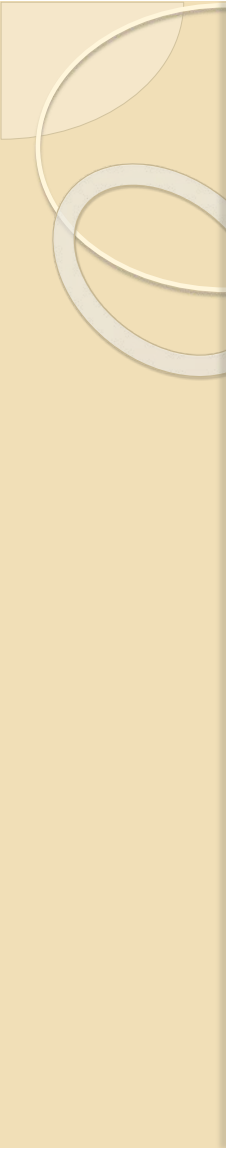
"A job in itself is not enough.

Employment can be liberating or oppressive.

It can be a great equalizer and unifier,
or it can be a divider and unjust discriminator.

Employment can be a joy.
It can fulfill one's sense of calling or vocation,
or it can be a way to keep people down
and "in their place.""

- Tyree, Kendrick, and Block
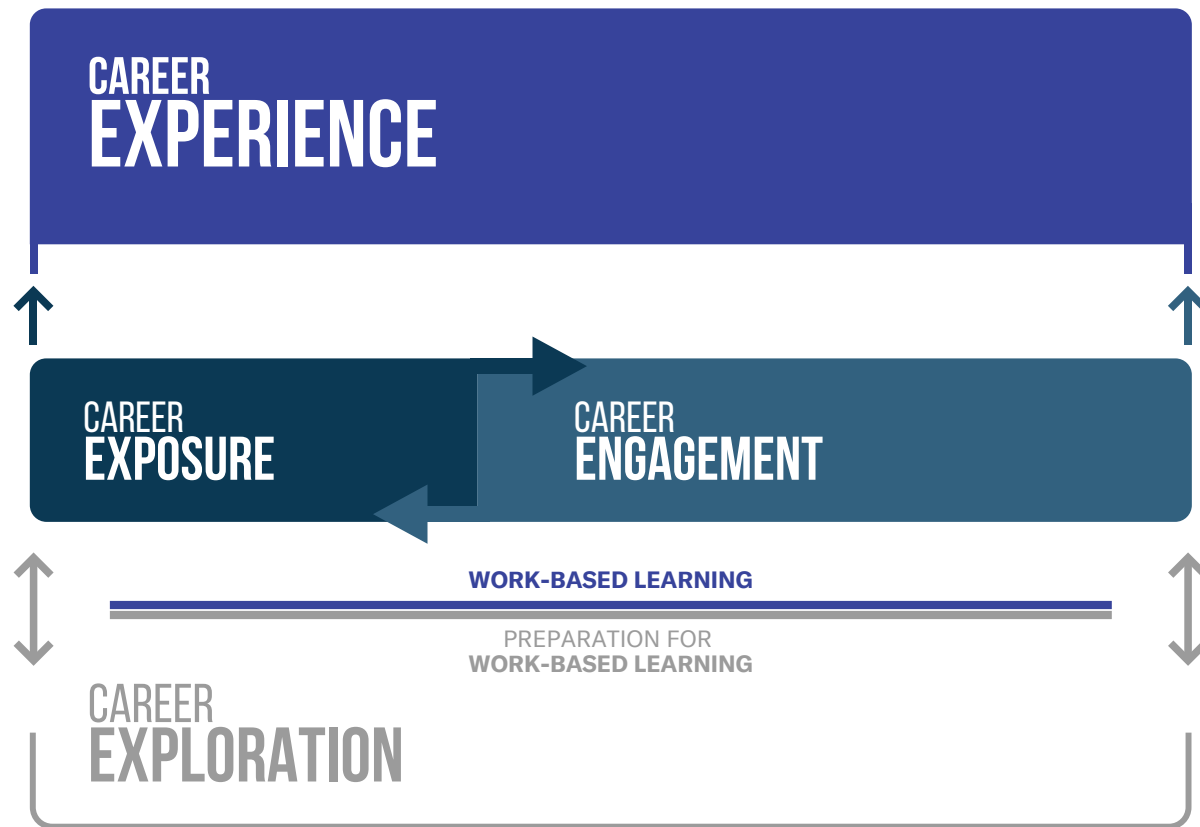
Work-Based Learning

def·i·ni·tion

\dĕ-fə′-nĭ-shən\

meaning of a word;
can be subjective

- A supervised program that links knowledge gained at the worksite with a planned program of study.

- Experiences range in intensity, structure and scope.
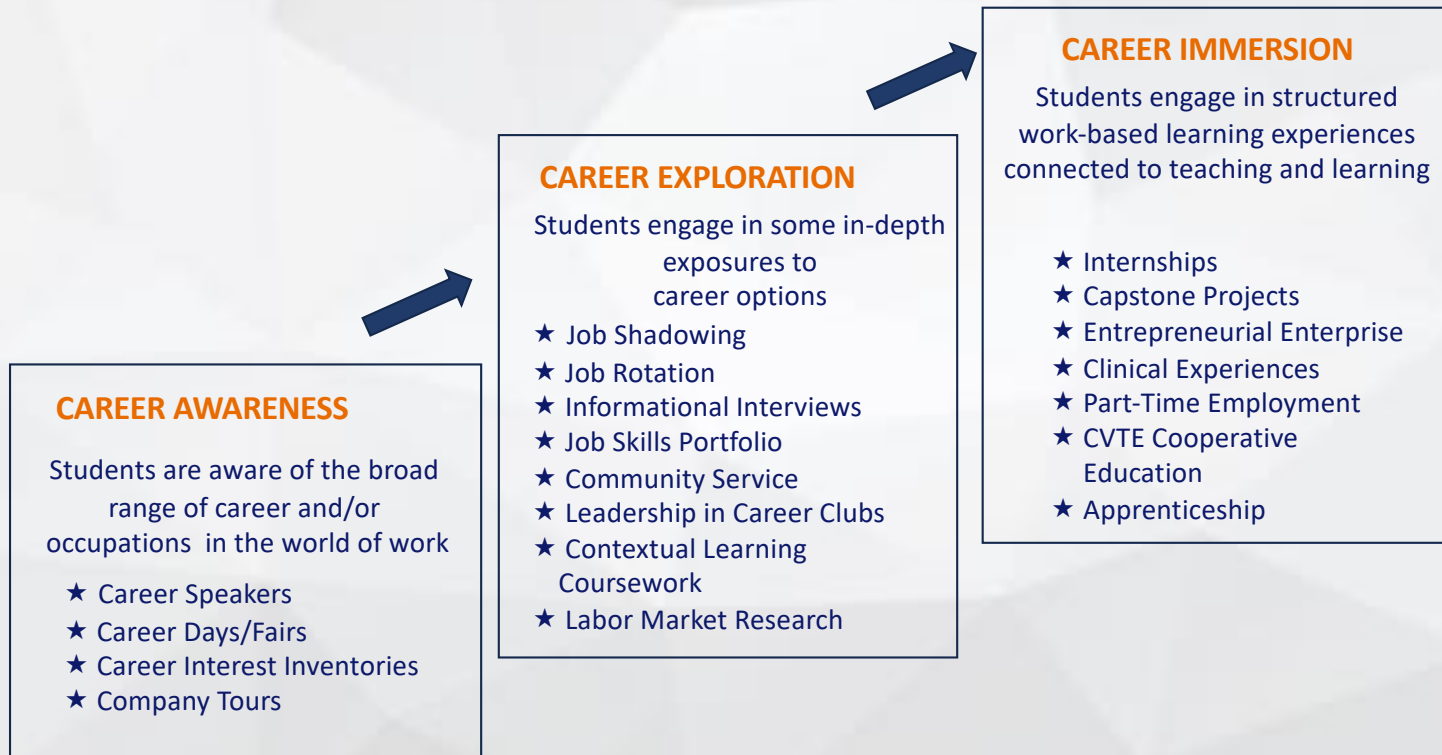
WORK-BASED LEARNING FRAMEWORK

CAREER EXPERIENCE

CAREER EXPOSURE

CAREER ENGAGEMENT

WORK-BASED LEARNING

PREPARATION FOR
WORK-BASED LEARNING

CAREER EXPLORATION

JFF

What are the range and types of activities?

Career Development Spectrum

The process through which an individual comes
to understand his or her place in the world of work

CAREER IMMERSION

Students engage in structured
work-based learning experiences
connected to teaching and learning

★ Internships
★ Capstone Projects
★ Entrepreneurial Enterprise
★ Clinical Experiences
★ Part-Time Employment
★ CVTE Cooperative
  Education
★ Apprenticeship

CAREER EXPLORATION

Students engage in some in-depth
exposures to
career options

★ Job Shadowing
★ Job Rotation
★ Informational Interviews
★ Job Skills Portfolio
★ Community Service
★ Leadership in Career Clubs
★ Contextual Learning
  Coursework
★ Labor Market Research

CAREER AWARENESS

Students are aware of the broad
range of career and/or
occupations in the world of work

★ Career Speakers
★ Career Days/Fairs
★ Career Interest Inventories
★ Company Tours

Career Development Education
Activities Guide and Glossary, Version 1.0

Introduction

There is an emerging consensus across the country and the Commonwealth — among students, parents, communities, educators, business leaders and elected officials - that academic proficiency alone is no longer enough to prepare students for success in the 21st century economy. In response, the state has launched a body of work that is designed to ensure that *all* students become *both* college *and* career ready by the time they complete high school.

Recently, the Board of Higher Education (BHE) and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) voted to adopt a common definition of "college and career readiness" (see Appendix A). This common definition will support a more seamless transition for students from elementary through the secondary level and on to post-secondary education, with educators at each stage sharing an aligned vision of what the end goals are for all students.

These end goals are based on students acquiring knowledge, skills and experiences in three domains: Learning (academic), Workforce Readiness, and Qualities and Strategies (personal/social) with the ultimate goal in each domain being competency attainment. With respect to the workforce readiness domain in particular, it is no longer enough merely to expose students to career information. They also need to *explore* career options, and then *experience* them through some form of work-based learning. They need an opportunity to process and reflect on these experiences with adult feedback and support. Accountability for students' competency attainment must become an expectation of influential adults responsible for organizing and delivering career development activities whether in traditional school settings or in the community.

This Guide/Glossary finds its roots in the rich history of Career/Vocational Technical Education (CVTE) in Massachusetts. CVTE programs are offered in local and regional school districts across the Commonwealth, with approximately one in five students enrolled in a CVTE program of study.

In addition, School to Career Connecting Activities also supports career development education in Massachusetts, particularly in our academic and comprehensive high schools.

The history of these initiatives laid the groundwork for the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education's Task Force on Integrating College and Career Readiness. In the Report *"From Cradle to Career: Educating our Students for Lifelong Success,"* the Task Force calls for, among other things, the creation of a toolkit and menu of opportunities for educators, employers and practitioners to help guide career development education (see Appendix B for a summary of the report recommendations).

What should students learn from these experiences?

What should be evaluated – and how?

Importance of Reflection

Documenting the Learning

Massachusetts Work-Based Learning Plan

Participant's Name:	Worksite Supervisor Name:
Participant's Email:	Worksite Supervisor Email:
Participant's ID Number:	School / Program:
Job Title:	Staff / Teacher Name:
Worksite:	Start Date: End Date:

JOB DESCRIPTION – Tasks, responsibilities, projects:

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

The employability skills below are essential in every work environment throughout one's career. Please discuss and review these skills at least twice during this work-based learning experience, in a first, baseline review and in a second review near the end of the work-based learning experience. **(Two reviews to capture growth -- Be objective!)**
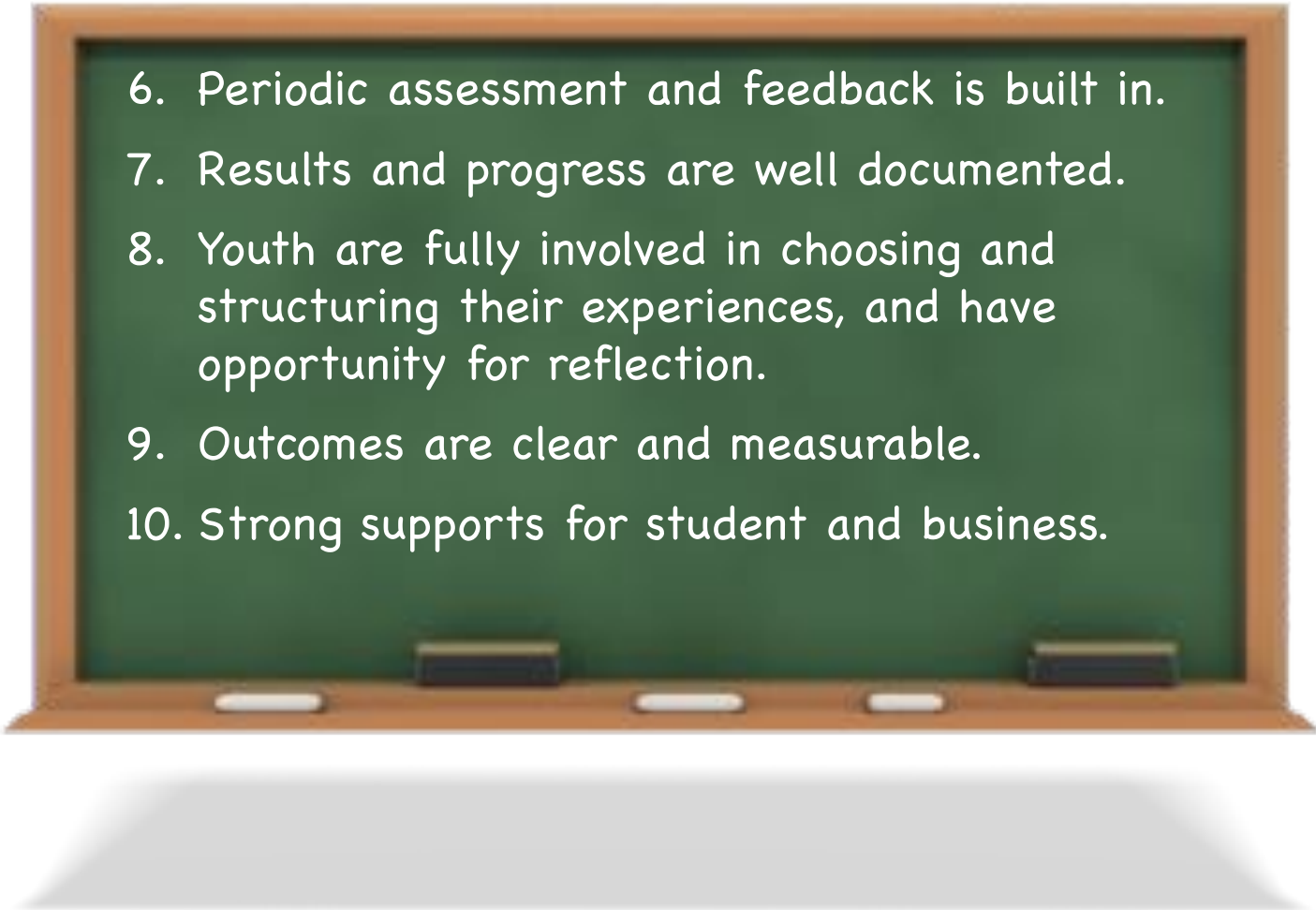
KEY

1 = Performance Improvement Needed: Needs to have a strategy to improve this skill
2 = Developing: Developing this skill; learning to address challenges related to this skill; aware of next steps needed to develop this skill
3 = Competent: Demonstrates this skill; aware of the importance of this skill
4 = Proficient: Consistently demonstrates this skill; shows initiative to learn about, enhance or apply this skill
5 = Advanced: Exceeds expectations; works with high level of independence, acts as a role model, or shows initiative to apply and extend this skill

SKILL	PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS	REVIEWS Use 1-5 Scale (See Key Above)		COMMENTS Notes, goals, and reflections for Review #1 and Review #2
Attendance and Punctuality	• Arrives on time and prepared for work • Provides sufficient notice if unable to report for work	Rev #1		
		Rev #2		
Motivation and Initiative	• Participates fully in tasks or projects from start to finish • Initiates interaction with supervisor for next task or project upon successful completion of previous one	Rev #1		
		Rev #2		
Communication	• Communicates effectively, orally and in writing, using the language and vocabulary appropriate to a variety of audiences within the workplace including coworkers, supervisors and customers • Demonstrates active listening skills; focuses attentively, makes eye contact or other affirming gestures, confirms understanding and follows directions	Rev #1		
		Rev #2		
Teamwork and Collaboration	• Works productively with co-workers, individually and in teams; support organization's mission and goals • Accepts direction and constructive feedback with positive attitude	Rev #1		
		Rev #2		
Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	• Notices and identifies challenges and problems that arise in the workplace • Brings concerns to attention of supervisors when appropriate • Develops solutions to challenges and problems by analyzing available information and looking at options, guided by expectations for the position and goals of the organization	Rev #1		
		Rev #2		
Workplace Policy, Culture and Safety	• Exhibits understanding of workplace culture and policy • Dresses appropriately for position and duties • Practices personal hygiene appropriate for position and duties • Follows professional standards for use of computers, phones and social media • Respects confidentiality • Complies with health and safety rules for the workplace	Rev #1		
		Rev #2		

1. Provide exposure to wide range of jobs and careers including those outside of "traditional" youth employing industries.

2. Strong links with labor market.

3. Experiences are age and stage appropriate.

4. Work site learning is structured and links back to classroom instruction.

5. Employer shares learning goals of instructors and students.

Work-Based Learning Best Practices

6. Periodic assessment and feedback is built in.

7. Results and progress are well documented.

8. Youth are fully involved in choosing and structuring their experiences, and have opportunity for reflection.

9. Outcomes are clear and measurable.

10. Strong supports for student and business.

Work-Based Learning Best Practices

Pay: *Yes or No?*

Know the Rules and Know The Difference!

Volunteering	Internships	Unpaid Work Experiences
• Unpaid activities • Non-profit organizations • Open to all citizens	• Paid or unpaid • Non-profit or for-profit organization • Temporary position • Emphasis on job training	• Non-profit or for-profit organization • Used for job exploration, assessment, training • Limited hours & specific circumstances • Only for people with disabilities

employmentfirstma.org

Additional Resources

massconnecting.org

https://cte.ed.gov/toolkit

Work-Based Learning Resources

Massachusetts School To Career Connecting Activities
Includes access to *Work-Based Learning Plan Resource Guide* -
www.massconnecting.org

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Career Development Education: Activities Guide and Glossary -
http://www.doe.mass.edu/connect/cde/guideglossary.pdf

Jobs For the Future (JFF)
JFF has a variety of resources on their website: **www.jff.org**
These include -
- Report: *Not As Hard As You Think: Engaging High School Students in Work-Based Learning*
- Report: *Making Work-Based Learning Work*
- *7 Principles for Effective Work-Based Learning*
- *Work-Based Learning Framework*
- *Work-Based Learning Self-Assessment Tool*
- *Work-Based Learning System Development Guide*

U.S. Department of Education
- Work Based Learning Toolkit - **https://cte.ed.gov/toolkit**
- Federal Partners in Transition: *What to Know About Work-Based Learning for Students and Youth with Disabilities* -
  https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/transition/products/fpt-fact-sheet--work-based-eperiences--11-5-15.pdf

Center on Transition Innovations – Virginia Commonwealth University
Fast Facts: Work Based Learning for Students with Disabilities -
http://centerontransition.org/documents/publications/Work_Based_Learning_Fast_Fact.pdf

National Center on Secondary Education and Transition
Quality Work-Based Learning and Postschool Employment Success (2003)
Summary brief on work-based learning specific to students with disabilities -
http://www.ncset.org/publications/viewdesc.asp?id=1192

Work-Based Learning: Best Practice Indicators

The following summarizes quality indicators for work-based learning from a variety of sources. It is useful to review these indicators to determine how well your work-based learning programs services are aligned with these best practice indicators.

Requirements for Quality Work-Based Learning

1. Must be "well-structured and well-integrated with the school curriculum and culminate in products or services that demonstrate learning."
2. Students must have "the opportunity to engage meaningfully with the experiences offered and to reflect thoughtfully on their learning."
3. Participating employers must share the learning goals of instructors and students.
4. Programs must have strong links to the labor market."

In other words, good WBL experiences should provide more than just a job or credits for the student and more than just "cheap labor" for the employer. The most effective WBL programs, research shows, have a clear link between what is learned in the classroom and what is learned on the job. The school-work connection does not happen automatically. It is clear that intentional planning and pedagogical decision-making need to occur for students to make the connections between school curriculum and workplace learning."

Source: Building High Quality Work-Based Learning Programs for High School Students, by Corinne Alfeld – January 2015 – Techniques Magazine

Quality Work-Based Learning Indicators

1. Experiences provide exposure to a wide range of work sites in order to help youth make informed choices about career selections.
2. Experiences are age and stage appropriate, ranging from site visits and tours, job shadowing, internships (unpaid and paid), and paid work experience.
3. Work site learning is structured and links back to classroom instruction.
4. A trained mentor helps structure the learning at the worksite.
5. Periodic assessment and feedback is built into the training.
6. Youth are fully involved in choosing and structuring their experiences.
7. Outcomes are clear and measurable.

Source: National Center on Workforce and Disability Youth

"Better integration of people with disabilities in our society, might not mean to assimilate them into whatever we deem 'normal', but rather to understand how they complete us."

- Emilie Weight