

A Vision for Work-Based Learning in New York State

**Developed by the NYC Work-
Based Learning Coalition**

Fall 2022

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Introduction: A Vision for Work-Based Learning in New York State	4
Recommendation #1: Provide updated universal career literacy standards that support a coherent scope and sequence, early exposure to career opportunities, and postsecondary planning for all students.	6
Recommendation #2: Redesign high school graduation and credit requirements to center and authentically assess work experience and career readiness alongside academic preparation.	9
Recommendation #3: Enable existing funding sources to support both CTE and non-CTE programs and provide incentives to employers to facilitate WBL opportunities.	12
Recommendation #4: Increase staff capacity at the school and district levels to support the identification and equitable distribution of WBL opportunities for all students.	14
The Time is Now	18

Executive Summary



The New York City Work-Based Learning Coalition aims to **increase equity, quality, and access to work-based learning (WBL) opportunities that prepare all young New Yorkers for career success and economic security in a rapidly changing labor market.** We envision a New York State in which every young person graduates high school with:

- **High-quality work-based learning experiences that support awareness, exploration, and preparation**
- **A plan outlining short- and long-term postsecondary goals aligned to their interests**
- **The knowledge and skills to pursue the first step of their plan**

At a time when education leaders nationally are drawing attention to rethinking school systems for career readiness, we are heartened by the **growing commitment to future-looking, learner-centered practices in New York City and State.** This can be seen in support for work-based learning and for rethinking graduation coming from New York City Schools Chancellor David Banks, Board of Regents Chancellor Lester Young, and New York State Education Commissioner Betty Rosa.

This platform outlines four recommendations for the New York State Education Department (NYSED), Board of Regents, and state legislators to consider that will make the possibilities for work-based learning a reality and in turn realize a broader vision of **meaningful economic opportunities with family-sustaining careers for all New Yorkers.**

Recommendation #1:

Provide updated universal career literacy standards that support a coherent scope and sequence, early exposure to career opportunities, and postsecondary planning for all students. While New York State has made progress through CTE, CDOS, and opportunities for some students to complete postsecondary career plans, these are insufficient. We recommend revising standards for learning and connecting these standards to postsecondary planning for all high school students.

Recommendation #2:

Redesign high school graduation and credit requirements to center and authentically assess work experience and career readiness alongside academic preparation. There are examples of innovative progress in New York. The CDOS pathway to graduation and the use of performance-based assessment tasks (PBATs) at some high schools can lead the way. In addition, seat-time waivers that were granted during the Covid-19 pandemic enabled greater flexibility in how high school credits were awarded. We recommend building on these by incentivizing authentic and performance-based assessment, reimagining high school credit requirements, and crediting work experience for all high school students.

Recommendation #3:

Enable existing funding sources to support both CTE and non-CTE programs and provide incentives to employers to facilitate WBL opportunities. Funding that goes to CTE programs and various efforts to support paid student internships is a valuable start. However, these programs reach very few high school students and do not involve many employers. We recommend redesigning requirements for existing WBL funding sources to reach more youth and investing in employers that engage students in WBL activities.

Recommendation #4:

Increase staff capacity at the school and district levels to support the identification and equitable distribution of WBL opportunities for all students. New York State currently requires schools to offer a WBL Coordinator position, but certification and systems to support this role are burdensome and limited. We recommend the state improve support for capacity at the school and district level by conducting an audit of WBL programs and staffing, reconsidering WBL Coordinator requirements and supports, and incentivizing and supporting work at the district level to focus on WBL. New York State has an opportunity to empower our education system to better serve students and create the conditions for a more inclusive economy. If we move forward on the four sets of recommendations presented here we can pave the way for a state where every student has a real chance to put themselves on a path toward a successful career, and create the conditions for a more powerful, competitive, 21st-century local economy. This coalition looks forward to working with the NYSED, Board of Regents, state legislators, students, and families to further refine and implement the broad policy framework set forth in this proposal in ways that meet the needs of students, schools and communities.

Introduction: A Vision for Work- Based Learning in New York State



The New York City Work-Based Learning Coalition aims to increase equity, quality, and access to work-based learning (WBL) opportunities that prepare all young New Yorkers for career success and economic security in a rapidly changing labor market. Comprising key stakeholders including organizations and practitioners, young people, advocates, employers, and thought leaders, the Coalition supports advocacy efforts in coordination with others across New York City and State.

We envision a New York State in which every young person graduates high school with: high-quality WBL experiences that support career awareness, exploration, and preparation; a plan outlining post-secondary goals aligned to their interests; and the knowledge and skills to pursue the first step of their plan. This platform outlines four recommendations for the New York State Education Department (NYSED), Board of Regents, and state legislators to consider that will help make this vision a reality.

Progress in New York City and State

We are heartened by the growing commitment to future-looking, learner-centered practices in New York City and State, which comes at a time when education leaders across the country—from Linda Darling-Hammond of the Learning Policy Institute, to Bruno Manno of the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, to Nancy Hoffman of Jobs For the Future—have called for rethinking how high schools prepare students for 21st-century careers. Upon taking the role of New York City Schools Chancellor, David Banks committed to ensuring “each and every one of our students graduates with a pathway to a rewarding career, long-term economic security, and equipped to be a positive force for change.” This represents a significant step beyond the traditional focus on graduation and immediate postsecondary education and training to long-term economic mobility. At the state level, Regents Chancellor Lester Young and NYSED Commissioner Betty Rosa have also committed to reconsidering graduation requirements and exploring alternative assessment systems.



What is Work-Based Learning?

Work-Based Learning

is a supported and reflective process where young people learn about themselves and post-secondary pathways. Young people who participate in WBL learn about work and careers through work experiences. Structured WBL experiences can occur in school or out of school and can include exploratory activities such as guest speakers and hands-on work experiences such as internships. WBL enables students to build a bridge between their interests and academic learning to their professional post-secondary lives.

Recommendation #1:

Provide updated **universal career literacy standards** that support a coherent scope and sequence, early exposure to career opportunities, and postsecondary planning for all students.



Progress in New York: CTE, CDOS, and Career Plans

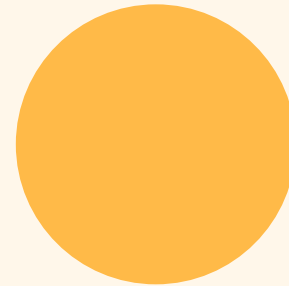
Thanks largely to policy advances in the last decade, some New York students have access to career awareness and readiness activities, often in 11th and 12th grades. For instance, many students in NYSED-approved Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs receive career preparation throughout high school and participate in work-based learning.

In addition, the State's establishment of a clear set of Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) standards offers a solid foundation on which educators can build academic classes. Since 2016 schools have also been able to leverage the CDOS Option 1 graduation pathway which supports students to participate in career exploration and readiness coursework and experiences, and to complete a formal career plan aligned with the standards.

Challenges & Limitations

Unfortunately, these advances in career pathways and planning have been limited. Although students in CTE programs complete courses for career preparation, they do not always have opportunities for meaningful career awareness and authentic exploration. In non-CTE high schools, students may gain awareness primarily through career panels or fairs but generally have even fewer opportunities to deeply explore interests or develop a sufficient understanding of or preparation for specific career pathways. Additionally, though school districts are required to complete transition plans with students with disabilities, too often they are checking boxes instead of working with students and families to create plans that are thoughtful and detailed ([NYSED, 2019](#)). Moreover, students with disabilities and multilingual learners are under-represented in many CTE programs ([AFC, 2016 & AFC, 2017](#))

While CDOS standards offer a solid foundation for academic integration, most schools are not intentionally integrating CDOS standards into academic classes, let alone a coherent four-year scope of coursework, and many do not address these standards at all. In 2021, less than one percent of students graduated using the CDOS pathway, a proxy—albeit imperfect—for access to a series of courses and WBL experiences aligned with the standards. Students in well-resourced high schools may work closely with counselors to design a postsecondary plan, but most high school counselors focus primarily on college access and success - not career planning - and their large caseloads prevent them from providing truly personalized guidance in most cases. As a result, many students, especially in under-resourced communities, are not supported to create robust and aligned postsecondary plans.

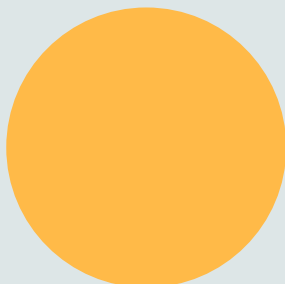


Recommendations

Career exploration and preparation is valuable for every student and should be integrated into every subject and class across the curriculum. We recommend providing updated career literacy standards to enable this, and connecting these to postsecondary planning for all students, including students with disabilities and multilingual learners.

Revise standards for learning.

We recommend that New York State update and promote universal career literacy standards by leveraging existing frameworks (see below) while also engaging New York youth, educators, and employers for input. These standards should identify key knowledge and skills that are transferable across a range of careers, including high-wage, in-demand jobs across New York State. The standards should support a coherent scope and sequence of curricula and experiences beginning in middle school.



The standards should emphasize students' real-world application of skills and connection with professionals through WBL opportunities that progress over time. These opportunities in turn should expose students to family-sustaining jobs in their region, facilitate career exploration and preparation, and support students to create personalized plans for postsecondary work and/or education.

Align standards to postsecondary planning.

We recommend the standards include methods of assessing progress and benchmarks through the development and presentation of personalized postsecondary plans. Every student in New York should be supported to create an informed postsecondary plan that outlines both immediate next steps after high school (college, training, service, etc.) and connects these to long-term goals informed by interests, knowledge, and skills. A coherent scope and sequence of career exposure, exploration, and readiness coursework and experiences can make this possible.



Resources & Examples

- [CDOS Learning Standards](#) (NYSED's existing career readiness standards)
- [CDOS Career Plan](#) (existing career plan, to be completed as part of CDOS Option 1)
- [CareerReady NYC Framework](#) (framework outlining a scope and sequence of activities)
- [NACE Career Readiness](#) (8 competencies for career readiness, as identified by the National Association of Colleges and Employers)
- [Colorado ICAP](#) (resources about Colorado's Individual Career & Academic Plan)





Recommendation #2:

Redesign high school graduation and credit requirements to center and authentically assess work experience and career readiness alongside academic preparation.

Progress in New York: CDOS Pathway, PBATs, & Seat-time Waivers

In 2016, New York State created access for all students to multiple pathways to a diploma. These “4+1” options enable students to take four Regents exams (instead of five) along with one other form of coursework, experience, or assessment as the fifth area of learning. One of these—the CDOS pathway—allows students to leverage career skills and work experience. This pathway lays out expectations for students to engage with relevant coursework, workplace learning experiences, ongoing interest development and exploration (career plan), as well as a tool to reflect on progress and skills (employability profile).

Another important innovation dates back to 1995, when New York State began granting high schools waivers from all Regents exams except for English in exchange for the implementation of rigorous teacher-designed performance-based assessment tasks (PBATs) as part of the New York Performance Standards Consortium. Research has shown that performance assessment supports deeper understanding, cognitive skills, and social-emotional skills. Indeed, while there is evidence of greater success for graduates from Consortium schools that use performance-based assessments ([Learning Policy Institute, 2020](#)), there is no evidence that high school exit exams increase achievement or postsecondary readiness (Coalition for Multiple Pathways to a Diploma, 2019). Additionally, many Consortium schools have established successful WBL programs, suggesting that freedom from stringent assessment requirements can enable allocation of resources towards work-based learning.

Finally, an important step in rethinking seat-time requirements for credit came more recently. Currently, state regulation requires students to complete 22 credits to graduate from high school (the equivalent of 44 New York City credits), with each credit requiring 54 hours of instructional time. During the Covid-19 pandemic, NYSED waived seat-time requirements, empowering schools to experiment with different schedules and design learning experiences that meet students’ needs and which support personalized and real-world learning.

Challenges & Limitations

New York is one of only 11 states that require students to pass exams to graduate from high school. And though the 4+1 diploma pathways are a step in the right direction, the pathways remain highly limited and underused: In 2021, only six percent of students across the state graduated with a pathway other than the previously used Humanities pathway



that requires 5 Regents exams (English, Math, Science, and 2 Social Studies). Similarly, schools with waivers to use performance-based assessments in place of Regents serve less than one percent of students in New York State. For the vast majority of schools, existing requirements (specific courses, requirements that emphasize time in class, and at least four Regents exams) leave little room to intentionally design personalized pathways for students and to allocate necessary time and resources for career exploration and WBL.

Recommendations

Schools should be supported and incentivized to offer multiple pathways by designing different learning experiences around students' interests ([Kenny, 2016](#)). To accomplish this, we recommend NYSED support more authentic assessment practices, a reimagining of credit requirements, and the crediting of WBL experiences.

Incentivize authentic and performance-based assessment

We strongly encourage the state to decouple Regents exams from graduation requirements. Though insufficient by itself, this is an important first step towards empowering schools to allocate time and resources to programs that best meet their students' needs and prepare them to make and successfully pursue post-secondary plans. Instead of requiring schools to invest valuable time and resources towards helping students pass tests, New York State should set graduation requirements that empower students to demonstrate their skills and competencies using authentic and rigorous methods, such as performance-based assessments, exhibitions, and portfolios.

The Performance-Based Learning and Assessment Networks (PLAN) Pilot is a positive step forward in this regard, and we encourage the state to make this a real priority, and to consider the ways in which alternative assessment systems can enable more opportunities for career exploration and readiness.

Reimagine credit requirements

Students and teachers benefit tremendously from flexibility for schools' use of time and credits to offer a range of non-traditional learning experiences that support students' growth. New York State should foster this flexibility by shifting away from earning credits through predefined seat time and towards demonstrations of learning, and ultimately redefining the requirements for a credit.

High school credits should be designed to enable a range of experiences such as WBL, independent projects, traditional coursework, online coursework, interdisciplinary learning, and deep study within specific areas of academic and career interest. New York State can draw upon the example of other states to accomplish this. In New Hampshire, students can earn credit outside the traditional classroom through independent study, internships and apprenticeships, private instruction, performing groups, community service, and online courses. Washington State does not have a seat hour requirement as part of the definition

of a credit; once a student demonstrates they have met the state learning standards for a course, it is appropriate to award the student the credit. North Dakota's Student Engagement Credit enables students to spend 10% of their instructional time participating in out-of-school projects or internships.

Credit work experience for all high school graduates

Learning through work allows students to graduate from high school with concrete experiences that can help inform their plans for post-secondary education and work. Additionally, work experience is one of the strongest predictors of future career success ([Brookings, 2014](#)).

To support young people in gaining real-world exposure to and experience within the New York workforce, we propose that every New York State high school graduate be required to complete WBL experiences that comprise at least one credit of real-world work and connections with professionals in an area of interest. This credit requirement – part of a broader reimagining of graduation requirements – could be earned through a range of WBL programs (registered or unregistered), including informational interviews, job shadows, internships, and apprenticeships. NYSED and the Board of Regents should build upon advances made with the CDOS pathway to make it easier for schools to offer credit for WBL experiences that take place both in- and out-of-school and which are aligned with the updated career literacy standards. NYSED should also ensure that districts are supported and held accountable for offering meaningful WBL and thoughtful postsecondary planning to all students, including students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and other vulnerable populations.



Resources & Examples

- [New York Performance Standards Consortium](#) (information about the performance assessment initiative, including outcomes for graduates)
- [International Big Picture Learning Credential](#) (assessment practice developed in Australia that measures learning across a range of contexts, including internships, which is being piloted in New York State)
- [Washington Mastery-Based Learning Collaborative](#) (alternative assessment pilot being conducted in Washington state)
- [New Hampshire's Learn Everywhere](#) (new program that enables students to earn credit for out-of-school work)
- [North Dakota's Student Engagement Guidance](#) (2019 law that redefined credits beyond instructional hours)
- [Measuring Forward: Emerging Trends in K-12 Assessment Innovation](#) (KnowledgeWorks report highlighting additional innovations across the country)

Recommendation #3:

Enable existing funding sources to support both CTE and non-CTE programs and provide incentives to employers to facilitate WBL opportunities.



Progress in New York: CTE and Paid Student Internships

New York City and State have funded a growing number of CTE programs in recent years and currently, the majority of WBL funding goes to CTE programs ([Here-to-Here, 2019](#)). These programs are a necessary and important resource for students who seek an in-depth and focused program in a specific career area to prepare to enter the workforce.

In addition, New York City in particular has launched and expanded funding for a variety of efforts—such as Learning to Work, Work Learn & Grow, Learn and Earn, and, the largest of the programs, SYEP (Summer Youth Employment Program)—that provide employers and nonprofits with funds for paid internships and other WBL experiences. In New York City, the Work Progress Program (WPP) also helps nonprofits to offer internships to low-income young adults across New York City.

Challenges & Limitations

While funding for CTE is a start, CTE programs are not designed for or available to all students. Only 6.5% of NYS students in grades 9-12 are enrolled in a NYSED-approved CTE program ([NYS Comptroller Report 2019–S-29](#)). Moreover, many students in CTE programs have limited opportunities for WBL experiences.

Similarly, other sources of funds cited above cover a small fraction of the year (in the case of the six-week SYEP) and/or a small fraction of high school youth. Many employers and nonprofits still do not offer any WBL opportunities. Among employers that do not offer such opportunities to high school students, 49% cited a lack of funding and 39% said increased funding would influence their decision to offer high school internships ([American Student Association, April 4, 2021](#)).

New York can learn from other states that have used funding to incentivize nonprofits and employers to create WBL experiences for youth. In Delaware, grant funding engaged the business community in planning for the expansion of paid work experiences for youth and adults. In New Jersey, employers receive funds to pay up to \$3,000 in wages for student interns ([Business Leaders United for Workforce Partnerships, 2016](#)).

Recommendations

To realize a vision of equitable economic opportunities for young New Yorkers, career readiness and WBL experiences need to be embedded in all students' academic pathways,

not just available to students pursuing specific CTE career pathways. To do this, we recommend redesigning requirements and funding mechanisms for existing WBL programs, and investing in employers that engage students in WBL activities.

Redesign requirements for existing WBL funding sources

All schools need access to funding to design and facilitate comprehensive WBL-focused programs that complement CTE programs. Funding is needed for dedicated staff, professional development, equipment, and logistical costs associated with work experiences such as transportation and insurance. The state can help by applying to the federal government to make existing funding streams (e.g., Perkins, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) available to support a broader range of programs, including CTE programs and both registered and unregistered WBL programs, and by increasing public-private partnerships to ensure opportunities reach all students.

Invest in employers that offer students WBL opportunities

One of the most essential aspects of effective WBL programs — engaging employers — is greatly influenced by access to additional federal and private funds. To support employers, New York State should offer tax credits to companies that adopt WBL strategies. A re-design of today's Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WIOA) and shift towards a WBL Opportunity credit could reward employers who include employee training, skills development, credentialing, and wages for interns/apprentices into their operational budget. By incentivizing investment in WBL at the industry level, the tax credit could help cover the cost of training, which would encourage employers to partner with schools.

In addition, New York State should invest more deeply in nonprofits that employ youth, drawing upon lessons from programs like WPP, SYEP, and Work Learn & Grow. Leveraging organizations with existing infrastructure to support WBL and engage community partners would greatly expand the opportunities available to students. Finally, New York State should increase registered apprenticeships by working with the business community to create and expand such opportunities.



Resources & Examples

- [Iowa Intermediary Network](#) (state-wide network funded through legislation that provides coordination and support for WBL)
- [Boston Private Industry Council](#) (city-wide intermediary that leverages public and private funds to support WBL programs and coordination)
- [Vermont Training Program](#) (State-run program that covers up to 50% of training costs, including WBL and training for high school students)

Recommendation #4:

Increase staff capacity at the school and district levels to support the identification and equitable distribution of WBL opportunities for all students.



Progress in New York: Coordinator of WBL Programs

To successfully implement and sustain universal career readiness activities, particularly WBL programs, schools and districts need dedicated staff responsible for collaborating with partners and designing and overseeing experiences for students, and leadership that understands the importance and centrality of career readiness to all facets of students' learning. In recent decades, many schools in New York, have created new positions and/or departments that support career readiness and postsecondary planning around the common goal of preparing students for career and college pathways. School staff supporting WBL can access resources and support through the membership-driven Work Experience Coordinators Association ([WECA](#)), the Career & Technical Education Technical Assistance Center ([CTE TAC](#)), and a number of other focused associations/coalitions.

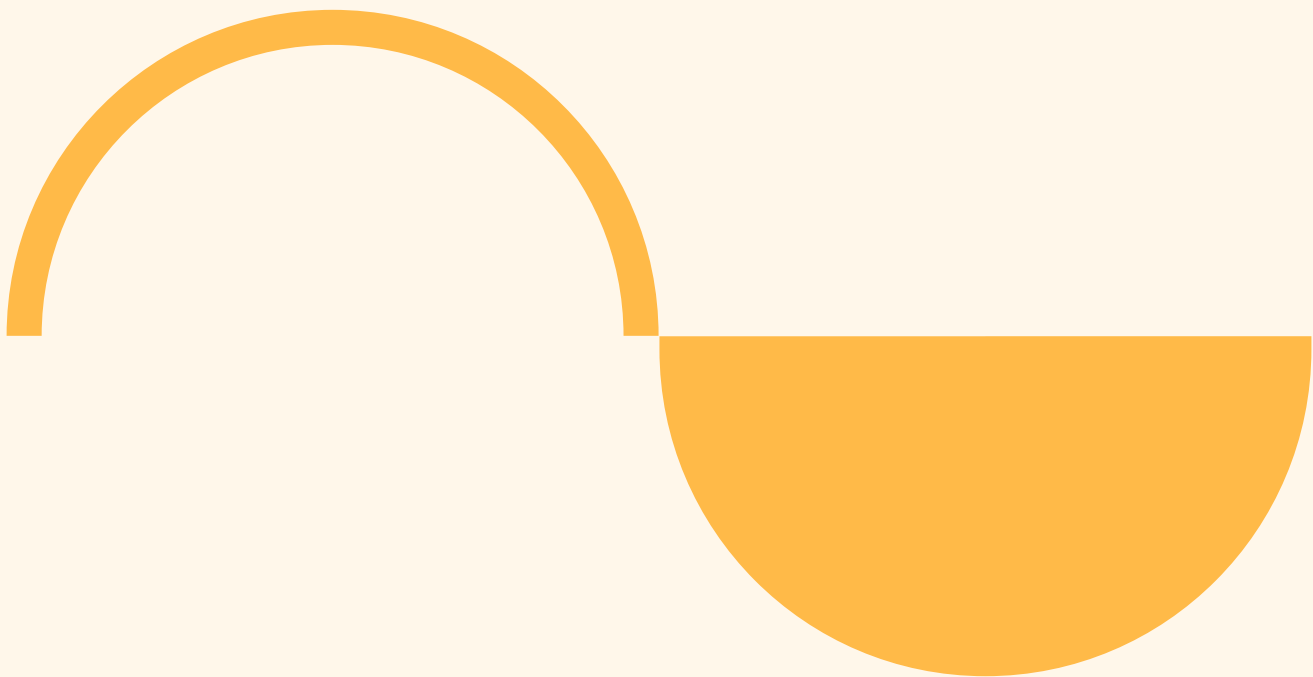
NYSED has offered two WBL Coordinator Extensions (#8981 and #8982) to enable teachers to supervise and award credit for WBL ([NYSED](#)). In New York City schools, which have had a waiver from certain State licensure requirements in the past, a range of staffing models have been used. In NYSED-approved CTE programs, WBL activities are supported by school staff who are licensed in a specific CTE industry and have acquired a WBL Coordinator Extensions. In non-CTE schools, WBL activities vary widely based on the principal's and school district's priorities. These schools often use a combination of teachers, school counselors, internship coordinators, and community liaisons to support WBL activities. When most effective, the WBL coordinator has a leadership role; is focused full-time on managing WBL programs, partners, and experiences; and collaborates with a team of staff (teachers, counselors, community liaisons) who share responsibility for connecting learning to career-connected experiences.



Challenges & Limitations

Many schools face challenges hiring and retaining individuals with the certifications described above. Districts and schools must grapple with the fact that CTE instructors with industry experience can almost always earn a higher wage in the labor market than they can as first-year teachers. This creates significant challenges for CTE schools seeking to develop or expand their WBL efforts. Additionally, because WBL coordinators' licensing is an "Extension," this responsibility is often tacked onto an individual's already full teaching workload, and without additional compensation. Finally, the requirements to obtain CTE certification or the WBL coordinator extension do not include training to work with students with disabilities or multilingual learners, which creates an added barrier to those opportunities for more vulnerable learners.

Non-CTE schools, like traditional LEAs, often lack the systems, structures, and industry partnerships that are at the core of the WBL experience. These schools highlight common challenges including accessing opportunities, building relationships with employers, integrating WBL and internships into school culture and structures, and more ([C. Lamb & C. Mojkowski](#)). Additionally, even when they do offer internships, many do not have the staff or systems to properly document all of the steps required for obtaining CDOS endorsements ([Big Picture Learning, 2020](#)). Meanwhile, lack of true partnerships with employers means that districts and schools are often making decisions about career preparation without understanding market demand or career pathways ([Q. Suffern & D. Mezera, 2017](#)).



Recommendations

Without appropriate staff capacity and leadership at the school and district level, WBL will likely remain inaccessible to most students and disconnected from students' academic learning. NYSED can take key steps to increase support and opportunities for district and school staff to study, understand, and support WBL. We recommend that the state: conduct an audit to better assess the current status of staffing supports for WBL, reimagine the WBL Coordinator Extension as a Certification and incentivize schools and staff to obtain this certification, and support collaboration with employers and coordination of resources.

Conduct an audit of WBL programs and staffing

There is no easily accessible data indicating the prevalence of WBL programs available, especially for students not enrolled in CTE programs, or highlighting the staffing structures supporting those programs, and the ways in which school teams collaborate to facilitate integrated WBL programs. An important first step in addressing staff capacity is developing a baseline understanding of the current status. NYSED should work with school districts to conduct an audit to better understand current staffing structures and needs. This begins with gathering data already collected by WBL coordinators, but should also extend to include a range of programs, including unregistered or uncredited programs that may nonetheless offer value too many students.

Reimagine WBL Coordinator requirements and supports

NYSED should revisit certification requirements to increase access and remove barriers for committed staff who are eager to help students connect to—and earn credit for—WBL experiences. WBL coordination requires forging and stewarding partnerships with local businesses (often outside of school hours), coordinating schedules, building relationships with students to identify relevant opportunities, and providing oversight for student experiences. As it exists currently, the WBL Coordinator Extension is an add-on to another certification, which suggests that these coordination responsibilities can be easily tacked on to another role. We recommend that NYSED reconsider the nature of the WBL Coordinator Extension and consider whether schools and teachers may be better served to create a new standalone certification in addition to the existing WBL Coordinator Extension that honors the unique skills, knowledge, and experience that WBL coordinators bring to this important work. Revised requirements for a new certification, as well as the existing extension, should include ongoing professional development, including a focus on supporting students with disabilities and multilingual learners.



NYSED should also offer incentives for more school staff to earn their Coordinator of Work-Based Learning certification from institutions of higher education. One model to consider is from Arkansas' Computer Science Initiative, which offered teachers \$10,000 to pursue this additional certification.

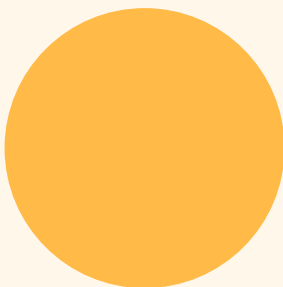
Incentivize and support WBL leadership within districts

District leadership is necessary to support clear and coherent collaboration with higher education and employer partners across the community, as well as equitable access to opportunities, and coordination of resources. Alongside increasing capacity of WBL Coordinators, NYSED should provide support to districts to develop the infrastructure, training, and resources needed for WBL Coordinators to form deep and effective relationships with employers to overcome problems cited earlier, and for all staff to integrate career readiness and real world learning into their areas of focus.



Resources & Examples

- [Arkansas computer science initiative](#) (state-wide initiative that offered financial incentives to teachers for pursuing additional certification)
- [Washington Career Launch endorsement](#) (establishment of regional networks to support educator learning communities around Career Launch initiative)





The Time Is Now

We write this at a moment of great possibility and great peril. Peril comes from the precarious state that so many New Yorkers find themselves in as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, a reckoning with the racism embedded in our society, and a rapidly changing economy that already leaves out too many New Yorkers, with real risk of worse to come. But that peril is matched by the possibility that comes from leaders in New York City and New York State who have expressed commitment and hope for rethinking how high schools prepare our state's youth for future careers and civic life.

Over the years, the state has launched various innovative experiments: granting waivers to some high schools to use performance assessments, expanding access to graduation pathways, developing routes to paid internships, and broadening career and technical education. These have produced successes—for some children, in some pockets of the state— but not for all, and particularly not for those from our most under-resourced communities. Instead of building on those successes, too many policies hamstringing progress and limit possibility. It is time now to build on all we have learned and bring work-based learning to all New York State students, so that every student graduates with the knowledge, skills, experiences, and plans they need to succeed in the modern workforce.

New York State has an opportunity to empower our education system to better serve students and create the conditions for a more inclusive economy. If we move forward on the four sets of recommendations presented here, we can pave the way for a state where every student has a real chance to put themselves on a path toward a successful career, and create the conditions for local economies to thrive across our state. Beyond the broad policy framework of this proposal, our coalition looks forward to working with the NYSED, Board of Regents, state legislators, students, and families to further refine and implement these ideas in ways that meet the needs of students, schools, and communities.



The New York City Work-Based Learning Coalition

comprises non-profits, educational institutions, young people, practitioners, advocates, families, employers, and thought leaders committed to increasing equity, quality, and access to work-based learning opportunities for New York City's youth. We aim to better prepare all young New Yorkers for career success and economic security in a rapidly changing economy/labor market. The work of the WBL Coalition is to discover, support, and implement advocacy efforts in coordination with young people, schools, nonprofit organizations, and NYC and NYS agencies.

New York City Work-Based Learning Coalition Members

Advocates for Children of New York • Beam Center • Big Picture Learning • Brooklyn Navy Yard • CareerWise New York • Coalition for Multiple Pathways to a Diploma • DreamYard • Education Video Center • Ellen Baxt • ExpandedED Schools • Futures and Options • Goddard Riverside • Henry Street Settlement • HERE to HERE • ImmSchools • Internationals Network for Public Schools • JobsFirstNYC • John Duval • New York Immigration Coalition • New Visions for Public Schools • obt (opportunities for better tomorrow) • PENCIL • Per Scholas • South Bronx Community Charter School • Teens Take Charge • The Bell • The Hispanic Federation • The Pinkerton Foundation • The Student Success Network • The Urban Assembly • United Neighborhood Houses • Virtual Enterprises International • Young Invincibles

Additional Endorsers of this Platform Include

Anthony Mignella • Brian Cohen • JobsFirstNYC • Good Shepherd Services • Henry Street Settlement • DreamYard Project • Internationals Network for Public Schools • Coalition for Multiple Pathways to a Diploma • Tracy Angelini • Robert Dodd • Casey Lamb • Big Picture Learning • Roger Horton • Kelly Cassaro • Transcend Education • Hispanic Federation • Sean Miller • BEAM Center • Business Teachers Association of NYS • Young Invincibles