

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**NYC Work-Based Learning Coalition Unveils New Report Urging Citywide  
Coordination of Youth Opportunities**

*Coordinated Efforts Aim to Overcome Confusion and Boost Access to Vital Work-Based Learning for  
Approximately 250K young New Yorkers*

New York City, February 20, 2024 – The **NYC Work-Based Learning Coalition** published its latest report titled “[Toward Career-Connected Learning: Action Priorities for Systems Building, Coordination, and Improvement.](#)” The report addresses the urgent need to advance equity, quality, and accessibility in work-based learning (WBL) opportunities for the youth of New York City. Navigating the world of youth employment programs in New York City can be a daunting task for young people, families, schools, and employers. The goal is to redesign a more cohesive landscape of career-connected learning opportunities to better serve the **approximately 250,000 young New Yorkers** that annually qualify for work-based learning placements. The current fragmented infrastructure means young people lose out on vital work-based learning opportunities essential for acquiring the necessary skills to succeed in today's job market.

The Coalition's report offers specific Action Priorities to build upon the existing foundation and usher in a new era of career-connected learning critical for the City's future workforce. These priorities focus on strengthening coordination among city agencies and capacity building, ensuring transparency for families, students, and employers, and expanding the landscape with a focus on equity.

To discuss the outcomes of this pivotal report, the NYC Work-Based Learning Coalition will host a [webinar](#), bringing together city agencies, non-profits, educational institutions, young people, and advocates to discuss the report's implications. This interactive event will delve into the future of career-connected learning in New York City.

**Date:** Tuesday, February 27, 2024

**Location:** Register here: <http://bit.ly/TowardCareerConnectedLearning>

**Key Action Priorities:**

1. **Strengthening Coordination:** The Coalition advocates for a central repository that explains how various WBL programs align, easing communication for young people, schools, providers, and employers. Clear branding and sequencing, along with streamlined contracting systems, are crucial steps towards transparency and coherence.
2. **Capacity Building:** To enhance the capacity of NYC Public Schools (NYCPS) and the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), the Coalition proposes centralizing support for Principals to better take advantage of career-connected initiatives. Additionally, the report emphasizes engaging young people, schools, and implementation providers in the design of recruitment processes.
3. **Support for Special Populations:** Recognizing the diverse needs of students, the Coalition recommends increased support for Students with Disabilities and immigrant youth. This includes centralizing support, providing additional funding per participant, and translating resources into multiple languages.

Conclusion: The Coalition praises the progress made by city leaders and community-based organizations in launching numerous programs over the past five years. However, they highlight the need for common metrics and accessible support, especially for undocumented youth.

“We are thrilled to publish our transformative report that outlines crucial Action Priorities for career-connected learning in our vibrant city. This document is not just a report; it's a roadmap toward equity, access, and quality in work-based learning opportunities for the young New Yorkers who represent our future workforce,” said **Monia Salam, NYC Work-Based Learning Coalition**

“ExpandedED Schools is proud to stand with our fellow members of the Work-Based Learning Coalition in the release of the report 'Toward Career-Connected Learning: Action Priorities for Systems Building, Coordination, and Improvement', which clearly outlines steps to cultivate a more integrated and dynamic ecosystem of career-connected learning for all young people. I am particularly grateful that coalition members considered deeply the collective strength of our schools, community partners, diverse industries and, most importantly, our young people, to develop these recommendations for lasting and equitable opportunities,” said **Saskia Trill, Ph.D., President and CEO of ExpandedED Schools**.

“As a parent, I find that families would benefit significantly from the Work-Based Learning Coalition's action priorities in several ways outlined in their recent program review,” said **Nicole Berry, a parent whose child attends Brooklyn STEAM Center and Medgar Evers College Preparatory High School**. “Access is the operative word I conclude with when considering the impact of the action priorities. They all lean towards providing students and their families with the resources to apply for and succeed in such work-based experiences despite race, gender, ability, or status.”

“For me finding a job was like a gamble because right when you think you got it, you don't. For the last 2 months or so, after graduating high school, I decided that I wanted to get a job so that I could start saving for college,” said **Diana Agbeyo, a student at Brooklyn High School for Law and Technology**. “I haven't been job searching as long compared to others, but it is hard, and I feel for those struggling.”

“I've spent a decade fighting for the funding and expansion of the Summer Youth Employment Program because I know that the benefits of work-based learning don't end with a final paycheck. Initiatives like those promoted in this new report are vital in teaching our young people lifelong skills, and it's essential that we continue the work to expand access to and opportunities within these programs. I thank the Work-Based Learning Coalition for their tireless efforts to develop and deliver actionable solutions on behalf of our city's young people,” said **New York City Public Advocate Jumaane D. Williams**.

“We are committed to addressing the 'programs rich, systems poor' problem that has caused numerous confusions for young people, their families, schools, providers, and employers. This is our opportunity to establish a healthy work-based learning eco-system,” **Jonathan Baez, Work-Based Learning Manager at Urban Assembly**.

“New York City's employers are eager to partner with city government and the nonprofit sector to help prepare today's youth for tomorrow's jobs and careers,” said **Degan Mercado Leopold, Chief Partnerships Officer at the New York Jobs CEO Council**. “This new report from the NYC Work-Based Learning Coalition is a roadmap to bring much-needed focus and clarity to a sprawling set of city programs. The Jobs Council is excited to continue our work with the Coalition to expand access to and raise the quality of WBL experiences for young New Yorkers.”

“As advocates in the New York City public school system, we have seen the positive impact that career-connected learning has on marginalized students' post-secondary opportunities and yet how difficult it can be to access these experiences. The NYC Work Based Learning Coalition's report highlights ways to

increase inclusivity within the system moving forward, and we hope NYCPS uses these recommendations to ensure all students, particularly those with disabilities and English Language Learners, have equitable access to career-connected learning moving forward,” said **Juliet Eisenstein, Esq. Assistant Director, Advocates for Children**

“New York City is rich in publicly and privately funded work-based learning opportunities for young people. If we could figure out how to coordinate all these opportunities so that young people, caregivers, schools, community-based organizations can navigate and access them, it would be a great coup!” said **Laurie Dien, Vice President, and Executive Director for Programs at Pinkerton Foundation.**

“The Work-Based Learning Coalition’s Action Priorities for System Building, Coordination, and Improvement report represents our shared vision for a more interconnected and effective environment of youth opportunities—one that promotes access and prioritizes equity. Together, as part of the Work-Based Coalition, we embrace the journey ahead with optimism, knowing that we are shaping not just careers, but unlocking limitless potential and fostering meaningful growth,” said **Noel Parish, Chief Innovation Officer, CareerWise New York.**

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About [NYC Work-Based Learning Coalition](#):

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 envision that every young person has access to high-quality career exploration and real-world work experiences. We aim to better prepare all young New Yorkers for career success and economic security in a rapidly changing labor market.

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