



How can my company benefit by working with talented students?

Companies can **save time and money** by investing in local talent and identifying and **recruiting** future employees. Companies benefit from **increased brand awareness** and their status as locally **preferred employers** thanks to the **relationships** they develop with students, families, and the community. School-based WBL coordinators assist by prescreening qualified candidates, matching employers with students who are interested and have related technical skills, and serving as the primary point of contact at the school. Participating students are motivated, mature, and may take on special projects that provide additional value to the employer. Students grow as valuable employees during the experience thanks to employer feedback and classroom-based reflection and portfolio development.

What is Work-Based Learning (WBL)?

Students and companies partner to reinforce academic, technical and employability skills through work experience. WBL prepares students for success in college and careers.

- Prepared juniors and seniors may participate in “capstone” WBL experiences such as **paid work experience** or **internships** for high school credit through a *Career Practicum* course
- In earlier grades, WBL activities help students explore careers through short-term experiences such as **industry tours, classroom speakers, job shadows** and **industry-led projects** in the classroom

Why is WBL needed in Tennessee?

WBL has been shown to reinforce the value of work as well as the critical employability skills Tennessee employers want most. By matching young talent with workplace mentors and positive employment through WBL, young people receive a positive and rich work experience. WBL has been shown to lead to positive future employment and improved lifelong earnings. Companies can better build a sustainable workforce and healthy, vibrant communities can flourish.

How old must a student be to work for my company through a WBL experience?

Students in capstone WBL experiences may participate at 16 or 17 years of age for a culminating learning experience. Tennessee Child Labor Laws (T.C.A. § 50-5-105) allow minors to work at age 14 or 15. More information about the *Myths vs. Facts* of working with minors may be found here:

https://www.tn.gov/assets/entities/education/attachments/wbl_myths_vs_facts_industry.pdf

Who is liable for WBL students?

WBL capstone students who are in paid positions are protected exactly like any other employee of the business. Most jobs require the same safety requirements for all employees and are governed by TOSHA requirements. For more information, see the *Myths vs. Facts* link above.

What jobs are prohibited for students?

There are 21 prohibited Hazardous Occupations (HO's) for minors who are not enrolled in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, which are clearly outlined in Child Labor Laws in Tennessee Code (T.C.A. § 50-5-106). Students enrolled in CTE programs of study receive extensive safety and technical training prior to placement and are able to work in greater capacities through WBL if they are 16 or older (T.C.A. § 50-5-107). A Hazardous Occupation Exemption form documents the student's eligibility based on his/her educational status and is kept on file with the student's Safety Training Log and Training agreement. All required documentation may be found here: <https://www.tn.gov/education/topic/work-based-learning>

Technical Skills &
School Curriculum

Soft Skills & WBL
Capstone Experience

Sustainable
Local Workforce