

MISSISSIPPI WORK-BASED LEARNING MANUAL



Mississippi Work-Based Learning Manual

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DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

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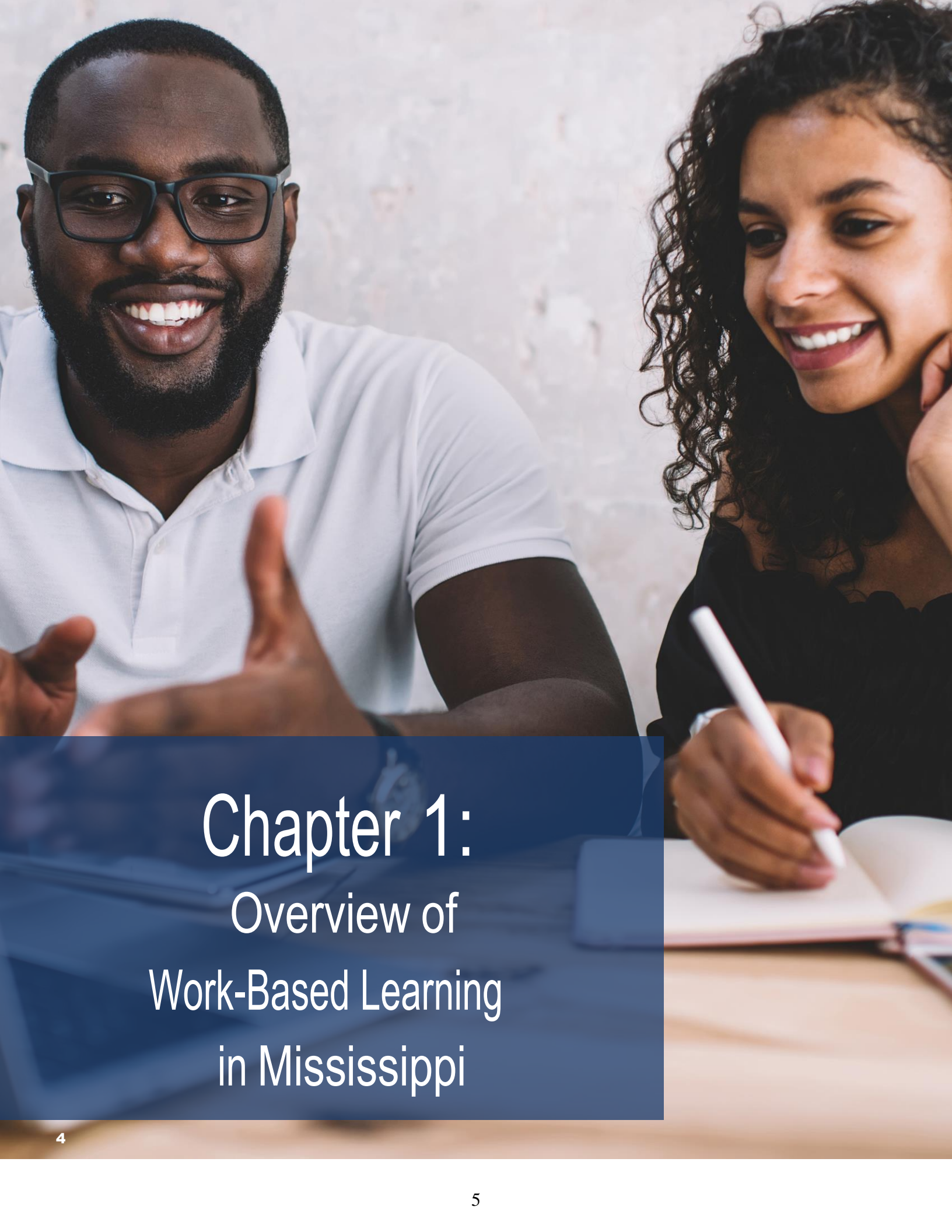
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Table of Contents

Chapter 1:	4
Purpose and Vision	5
Career Development Continuum	6
WBL Activities for Phase 4.....	9
Avenues for Work-Based Learning in Mississippi.....	10
Benefits of WBL Implementation	11
Steps for Implementation	12
Considerations for WBL Implementation	13
Chapter 2:	16
Required Key Components of Embedded WBL Experiences	17
WBL Assessment Rubric	18
Chapter 3:	20
Career and Technical Diploma Endorsement.....	21
Student Eligibility	21
Required Key Components of Credit-Bearing WBL Experiences	22
WBL Work Release	23
Program Funding.....	23
Chapter 4:	24
Required Key Components of Career Academy WBL Experiences.....	25
Career Academy WBL Coordinator.....	26
Responsibilities of a Career Academy WBL Coordinator	27



Chapter 1:

Overview of Work-Based Learning in Mississippi

Purpose and Vision

The vision of the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) is to create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce and flourish as parents and citizens. To accomplish the vision of a knowledgeable and skilled workforce, career development must begin as early as preschool and function on a continuum throughout one's life. In Mississippi, this continuum provides exposure, instruction, and learning to help students understand the changing academic and skill requirements of the emerging workplace, make sound decisions during the career development process, and become lifelong learners. The continuum includes grade-specific phases with activities that expose students to a wide variety of engagement opportunities. The four phases are:

- Phase 1: Career Awareness (Grades K-5)
- Phase 2: Career Exploration (Grades K-8)
- Phase 3: Career Preparation (Grades K-12)
- Phase 4: Career Training/WBL (Grades 9-12)

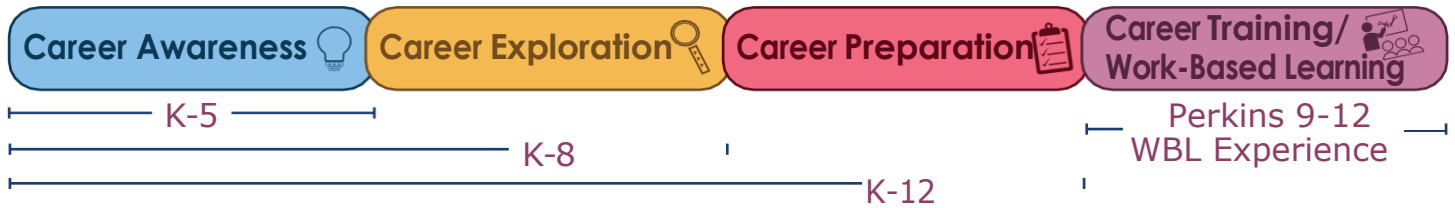
Perkins V defines work-based learning (WBL) as “sustained interactions with industry or community professionals in real workplace settings, to the extent practicable, or simulated environments at an educational institution that foster in-depth, firsthand engagement with the tasks required in a given career field, that are aligned to curriculum and instruction.” According to this definition, the WBL experiences outlined in chapters 2-4 of this manual exist in the Career Training/WBL stage of the career development continuum. Students participating in these Phase

4 WBL experiences engage in hands-on learning, take on new roles and responsibilities, develop relationships with trusted adult mentors, and connect to broader social and professional networks.

This manual is intended for all educators, but particularly for those who will be facilitating meaningful WBL experiences for students in Grades 9-12. The manual provides an overview for developing and implementing WBL at the secondary level, offers guidance and considerations for the logistics of implementation, and details the different avenues of WBL offered through MDE and career and technical education (CTE). This manual is not intended to be a step-by-step guide; rather, it summarizes all WBL experiences available for K-12 students in Mississippi. Further information and training are needed to implement many of the practices outlined in this manual, particularly those listed as Phase 4 experiences.



Career Development Continuum



Each phase in the continuum is designed to provide students with structured business and industry partner engagement opportunities, often in workplace settings, and to reinforce and build on classroom-based instruction. Academic, technical, and employability skills are developed and strengthened in preparation for future careers. The phases that will be utilized in Mississippi are as follows:

PHASE 1: CAREER AWARENESS



These activities help students learn about a variety of careers, the education and training required for those careers, and the typical pathways for career entry and advancement. Career awareness activities expose students to a wide range of occupations in the private, public, and non-profit sectors.

Activities might include:

Career
fairs

Interest
assessments

College
fairs

Job awareness
videos

PHASE 2: CAREER EXPLORATION



These activities help students learn about the skills needed for specific careers by observing and interacting with employees in the workplace. As the next step after career awareness, career exploration activities are focused on specific careers in which students are interested.

Activities might include:

College
tours

Industry
tours

Guest
speakers

Skills
assessments

PHASE 3: CAREER PREPARATION



These activities integrate career and academic skills acquired in the classroom with skills and knowledge acquired in the workplace. These experiences include feedback from business and/or industry personnel and reinforce employability and work readiness skills and the understanding and application of school-based learning to specific careers. Students use these activities to help make decisions about future education and training options.

Activities might include:

Mock
interviews

Career-related
competitions

Job
shadowing



PHASE 4: CAREER TRAINING/WORK-BASED LEARNING

These activities are authentic work experiences evaluated by business and/or industry partners that refine the technical and employability skills used in the workplace. Students should demonstrate quality technical work and strong employability skills.

Activities include:

Clinicals/Worksite
field experiences

Entrepreneurship

Internships

Pre-apprenticeships

School-based
enterprises

Job placements

Simulated
worksites

MDE provides resources that give an overview of career development activities found in the first two phases of the career development continuum [here](#).

Perkins V defines WBL as “sustained interactions with industry or community professionals in real workplace settings, to the extent practicable, or simulated environments at an educational institution that foster in-depth, firsthand engagement with the tasks required in a given career field, that are aligned to curriculum and instruction.”

The remainder of this manual focuses on career training/WBL, Phase 4 of the continuum.

WBL Activities for Phase 4

Within WBL, students can immerse themselves in various activities to ensure quality learning. These activities are defined below:

Apprenticeships/Pre-Apprenticeships

Formal, often paid, programs that combine job-specific technical instruction with the structure of onsite job experiences. Apprenticeships/Pre-apprenticeships can include registered programs with the United States Department of Labor, company-specific programs administered by a business, or industry-specific programs administered by a postsecondary institution in partnership with one or more companies.

Clinicals/Worksite Field Experiences

Work-based opportunities that give sufficient time and opportunity for the students to develop and expand their skill levels.

Entrepreneurship

Students provide goods or services for clients. Entrepreneurship provides an opportunity for a student to establish a business from the initial startup phase through full operation while receiving guidance from teachers and industry partners.

Internships

Business/industry partners give sufficient time and opportunity for the students to develop and expand their skill levels while participating in a variety of work assignments and duties as directed by the business/industry partner.

Job Placements

A period of supervised work where students have the opportunity to experience working in a specific role with a business or industry. These placements can be paid or unpaid.

School-Based Enterprises (SBE)

These entrepreneurial operations are managed and operated by students. SBEs are program-specific businesses housed in a school setting that provide actual goods or services to meet the market's needs. These businesses integrate academic content and an opportunity to build management, supervision, and leadership skills. Industry partners should collaborate with students participating in a SBE to ensure a quality experience is occurring.

Simulated Worksites

The simulated worksites must use appropriate, industry-grade equipment and supplies and be approved by the industry partner(s). Work activities in simulated worksites include industry oversight to authenticate the WBL experiences and best prepare students for the workforce.

Avenues for Work-Based Learning in Mississippi

Below are the three avenues of WBL experiences in Mississippi:

Embedded WBL experiences take place during credits 3 and 4 within a CTE career pathway.

Credit-Bearing WBL experiences take place within specific courses (Work-Based Learning I and Work-Based Learning II) facilitated by an instructor with a 917 endorsement.

Career Academies WBL experiences occur within a career pathway in schools that have adopted the career academy model.

Avenue of WBL	Industry Guided	Required Hours	Work Location	WBL Coordinator/ Teacher Requirement	Counts as CCR Credit
Embedded	Yes	35 or more	Worksite or school	CTE course endorsement (varies by program)	No
Credit-bearing	Yes	70 or more	Primarily worksite	917 endorsement	Yes (140 hours during 11th and/or 12th grades)
Career Academies	Yes	Varies	Primarily worksite	917 endorsement	Yes (140 hours during 11th and/or 12th grades)

In each of these avenues, the key requirements for WBL are:

- Experiences must correlate with the student's individual success plan (ISP) and course of study (if enrolled in a CTE program). Process Standard 14.1.4 of the [Mississippi Public Accountability Standards](#) requires that all students participate in creating their [ISP](#) prior to exiting the seventh grade. The ISP is reviewed and updated annually to guide and document students' secondary and postsecondary goals.
- Students must engage with a business or industry partner throughout their work experience. Students complete their required WBL hours at the business and/or the school site.
- All WBL documentation required for each given avenue must be completed.

Key Requirements for WBL

- WBL experiences must correlate with the student's ISP.
- Students must engage with business or industry partners.
- All required WBL documentation must be completed.

Benefits of WBL Implementation

Students

- Explore their chosen career goals
- Build their technical knowledge and skills
- Experience work conditions, expectations, and strengthen employability skills
- Form relationships with potential employers and/or work references

Industry Partners

- Ability to cultivate future employees by ensuring skills for difficult-to-fill positions are taught
- Assistance with special projects that provide value to the business
- Participation in WBL through school districts cultivates diversity in the workforce
- Earn a reputation for being a good employer

Community

- Foster economic growth by contributing to the creation of a skilled local workforce
- Reduction of unemployment, increased consumer spending, and attraction of new business
- Increase in-school and community collaboration
- Promote awareness and support for both school and local businesses

Steps for Implementation

Finding Industry Partners

- Career fairs
- Advisory committee
- Personal contacts
- Professional organizations (chambers of commerce, rotary clubs, industry associations)

Training for Success

- Industry partners
- Student employability skills
- Worksite tours
- Mock interviews

Innovations for Mutually Beneficial Partnerships

- Work force development agencies
- Third party placements
- Booster clubs
- PTOs
- Regional and national organizations
- Paid internships
- Tax credit

Logistics

- Transportation
- Scheduling
- Liability insurance
- Child labor laws

Documentation

- Feedback
- Final evaluations
- Student reflections

Considerations for WBL Implementation

Along with the many benefits of WBL, it is also important to recognize issues that can be associated with successful implementation. As school districts foster new WBL opportunities, districts must address key legal issues. It is the responsibility of each school board, superintendent, administrator, principal, teacher, and director to be aware of and in compliance with all legal aspects related to student WBL experiences.

Things to consider:

Students

- Scheduling WBL hours with academic requirements and extracurricular activities
- Transportation
- Placing students

District Administration

- Transportation
- Liability
- Scheduling
- Personnel

Industry

- Time commitment of employees to supervise and train WBL students
- Effective feedback

School Personnel

- Time commitment
- Worksite visits
- Establishing industry partnerships



Roles and Responsibilities

WBL experiences offered through MDE must have a team of individuals committed to making the experiences successful. Strong partnerships between local educational agencies and business and industry partners are essential to the development of the program. Partners should work together to design the best approach for their situation, obtain resources, and recruit and support students. The following lists of roles and responsibilities are not all-inclusive but give general guidance for team members.

WBL Coordinator

- Seeks out and sustains industry partnerships
- Compiles and maintains required documentation
- Conducts onsite visits
- Collaborates with the student to develop and maintain an accurate ISP
- Collaborates with the worksite employer/supervisor and student to develop a quality training plan
- Conducts periodic check-ins with students
- Maintains a data reporting system for all WBL placements
- Holds a valid educator license with the 917 add-on endorsement

*Academy WBL coordinators please refer to Chapter 4

Industry Partners

- Supervise and mentor WBL students
- Collaborate with the WBL coordinator and student to develop a quality training plan
- Provide the student with clear job tasks and expectations
- Conduct a minimum of two student performance evaluations per semester
- Provide an orientation and safety program for the work-based student at the jobsite
- Complete a background check as required by district personnel to supervise students
- Increase student responsibilities based on job performance

Instructors

- Assist the WBL coordinator in roles and responsibilities
- Provide preparatory activities for the experience
- Prepare students for specific WBL sites
- Collaborate with the students concerning the development and maintenance of students' ISPs
- Hold a valid educator license with the correct endorsement


Students

- Collaborate with the instructor(s) and WBL coordinator to develop and maintain an accurate ISP
- Collaborate with the WBL coordinator and worksite employer/supervisor to develop a quality training plan
- Maintain open communication with the WBL coordinator and industry partner
- Complete all records and documentation required for the program
- Adhere to school and workplace policies and procedures
- Follow the district system for documenting the number of work hours

Parent and/or Guardian

- Complete WBL orientation
- Sign required WBL paperwork
- Support the student in meeting the requirements of the WBL program
- Communicate concerns to the WBL coordinator to allow appropriate interventions if needed



A photograph of two students, a young Black woman in the foreground and a young white woman in the background, both focused on a robotics project. They are working with a complex assembly of metal brackets, wires, and electronic components. The young woman in the foreground is wearing a red, white, and blue striped shirt. The young woman in the background has long blonde hair and is wearing a light blue shirt. The background is slightly blurred, showing a bright, indoor setting with large windows.

Chapter 2:

Career Pathways

Embedded WBL

The Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, referred to as Perkins V, requires every state to annually report on [Indicators of Performance](#) for all CTE pathways. All pathways using WBL as a program quality indicator will be referred to as **embedded WBL** experiences or **Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE)** programs for the agriculture, food, and natural resources career pathway. Refer to the state assessment requirements for yearly quality program indicator requirements.

Perkins V defines WBL as “sustained interactions with industry or community professionals in real workplace settings, to the extent practicable, or simulated environments at an educational institution that foster in-depth, firsthand engagement with the tasks required in a given career field, that are aligned to curriculum and instruction.” Mississippi has expounded upon the Perkins V WBL definition to detail state requirements of CTE program quality in the WBL Assessment Rubric. This rubric provides direction and specifics on uniform standards for the embedded WBL experiences.

The MDE Office of Career and Technical Education designates how each program will be assessed for Perkins V.

Required Key Components of Embedded WBL Experiences

1. Experiences must correlate with the student’s individual success plan (ISP) and course of study (if enrolled in a CTE program). Process Standard 14.1.4 of the [Mississippi Public Accountability Standards](#) requires that all students participate in creating their [ISP](#) prior to exiting the seventh grade. The ISP is reviewed and updated annually to guide and document students’ secondary and postsecondary goals.
2. Students must engage with a business or industry partner throughout their work experience. Students complete their required WBL hours at the business and/or the school site.
3. All required WBL documentation must be completed.

WBL Assessment Rubric

Multifaceted, high-quality feedback from all stakeholders throughout the WBL experiences will better prepare our students to transition to the workforce. The WBL Assessment Rubric differentiates the quality of student experiences into four levels based on:

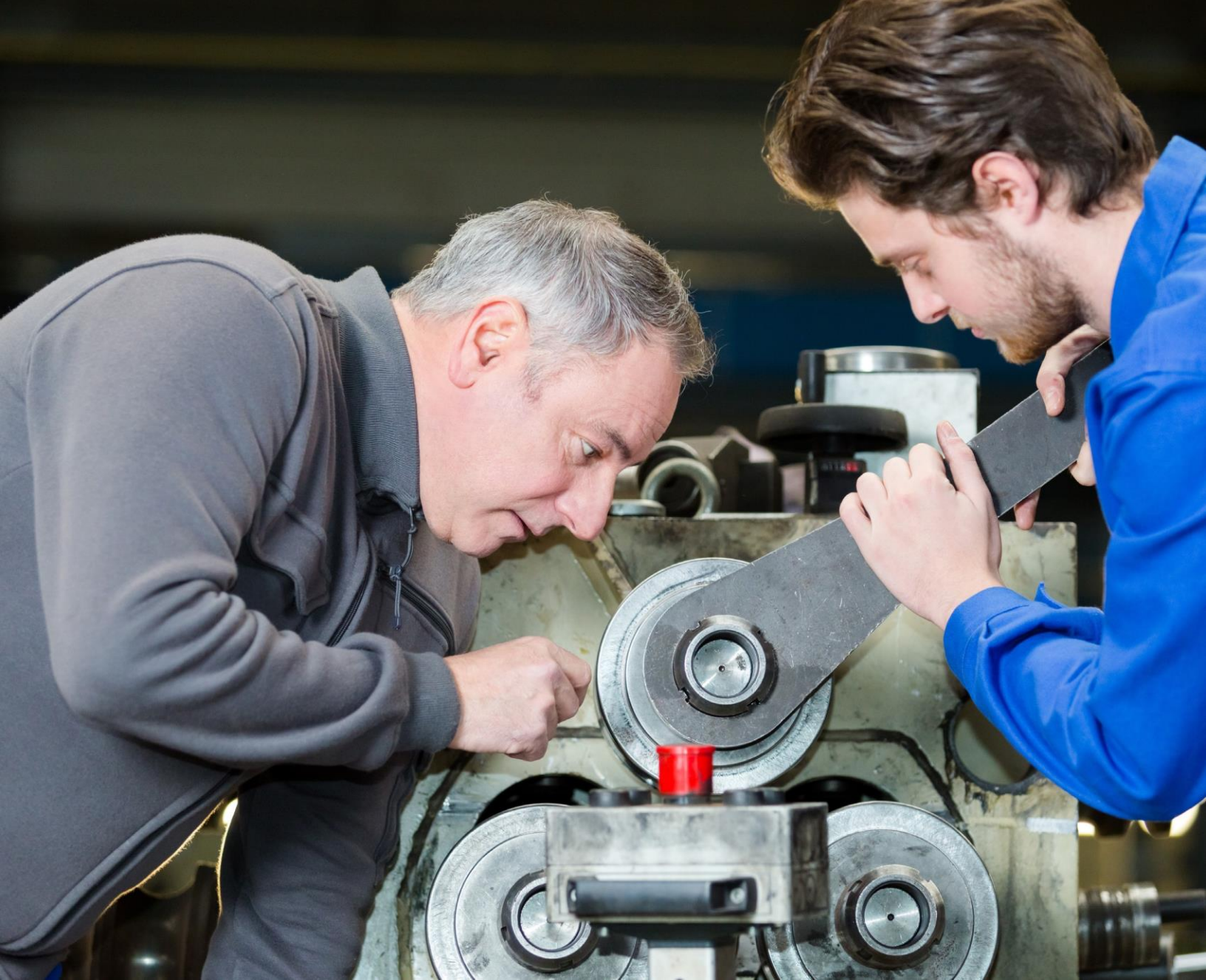
- Hours of WBL experiences
 - Minimum of 25 for embedded (25 needed for program quality; 35 needed for Level 4)
 - Minimum of 70 for credit-bearing and career academies
- Overall rating from industry feedback
 - Feedback related to academic, technical, and employability skills
- Student reflections
 - Based on industry and teacher feedback

Phase 4: Career Training/WBL Rubric Levels

Quality of WBL	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Time	10-14 hours	15-24 hours	25-34 hours	≥35 hours

Only hours with an average proficient industry rating of 2 or greater will apply to WBL quality hours. Levels 3 and 4 will count for WBL quality for MDE. Level 4 will be reported federally.

For an updated WBL assessment rubric, visit the assessment page on the RCU website.



A student's overall WBL experience will be evaluated by the instructor, the supervising industry partner, and representatives of MDE. A final WBL level of 1-4 will be given based on the WBL Assessment Rubric. Students reaching a Level 4 WBL experience will be reported for Mississippi's Perkins V WBL data.



Chapter 3:

Credit-Bearing WBL Courses

The WBL credit-bearing courses, Work-Based Learning I and Work-Based Learning II, give Mississippi high school students the opportunity to earn Carnegie credit for participating in career training work experiences as defined in Chapter 1 of this manual. The main purpose of the WBL credit-bearing courses is to provide students with structured work experiences guided by WBL coordinators and business/industry partners.

While some classroom instruction may be appropriate, the WBL credit-bearing courses are not classroom-based and the number of Carnegie credits students receive is based on the number of hours that students participate in career training work experiences while enrolled in a WBL course. Students may receive up to 2 Carnegie credits in each WBL course.

Course Codes	Course Title	Required WBL Hours	Carnegie Credit
995010	Work-Based Learning I	70	0.5
		140	1
		210	1.5
		280	2
995011	Work-Based Learning II	70	0.5
		140	1
		210	1.5
		280	2

College- and Career-Readiness Credit

Students enrolled in this course during their 11th- or 12th-grade years may substitute one WBL credit (140 hours) for the College- and Career-Readiness (CCR) credit required for graduation.

Career and Technical Diploma Endorsement

Credit earned in this course satisfies the WBL requirement option for the Career and Technical Diploma endorsement as long as it was not previously used for the CCR credit.

Student Eligibility

- Must be 16 years of age or older
- Approval of CTE director, WBL Coordinator, and/or administrator (in accordance with local district policy)

Student Recruiting

A planned recruitment campaign is important for WBL course success. Support will be needed from teachers, counselors, administrators, and the students. Activities should be planned well in advance to articulate with overall school calendars and to have adequate time to visit feeder programs. Designate a specific time frame for recruitment activities (e.g., coordinate recruitment with counselors, classroom visits, student-directed presentations, student organization presentations, posters/flyers/brochures, etc.). Districts should abide by the requirements stated in State Board of Education Policy, Rule 86.3 Assignment Schedule of Local CTE Personnel.

(Note: For a quality WBL experience, it is recommended that no more than 50 students be assigned to a WBL coordinator per semester or grading period.)



Required Key Components of Credit-Bearing WBL Experiences

1. Experiences must correlate with the student's individual success plan (ISP) and course of study (if enrolled in a CTE program). Process Standard 14.1.4 of the [Mississippi Public Accountability Standards](#) requires that all students participate in creating their [ISP](#) prior to exiting the seventh grade. The ISP is reviewed and updated annually to guide and document students' secondary and postsecondary goals.
2. Students must engage with a business or industry partner throughout their work experience. Students complete their required WBL hours at the business and/or the school site.
3. Completion of all required WBL documentation includes:
 - Training agreement for each student
 - Business or industry partner evaluations
 - Student reflections

In addition, the following key components are required for every student enrolled in a WBL credit-bearing course:

- Course and worksite orientation
- Minimum of 70 work hours in a career training experience
- Professional portfolio that communicates the student's skills and strengths with employers and provides a platform for self-promotion and future employment
- If needed, career awareness and career exploration activities prior to career training

(Note: Students do not receive credit for hours of career awareness and career exploration activities.)

WBL Work Release

Students enrolled in WBL and completing school credit off campus are in compliance with early release requirements.

**Beginning Fall 2022-2023, see the MSIS Secondary Approved Course Code report for the new WBL work release course code to be used in conjunction with WBL I or II codes. (The WBL work release course code earns no credit on its own.)*

Program Funding

WBL programs receive funding from the MDE Office of CTE and Workforce Development depending upon the availability of funds. WBL programs must meet all MDE guidelines and requirements as specified in this guide. Each district must budget an adequate amount for the WBL program. Mileage reimbursement or use of a district vehicle is recommended for supporting the WBL coordinator to assist with covering travel expenses, as they are expected to conduct site visits and meet with business and industry in the community. WBL teachers are eligible for extended contracts in accordance with *Mississippi Code Annotated 37-31-13*.





Chapter 4:

Career Academy WBL

A career academy is a personalized small learning community within a high school that involves a cohort of students and a team of teachers using a curriculum based on specific career interests. The career academy model is a delivery method some districts use to integrate their academic and career pathways.

Career academies are required to have a robust training program that prepares students for WBL. A detailed Academy Master Plan is mandatory, including a timeline and benchmarks to track progress of the following pre-requisites to the WBL credit-bearing course in a career academy.

Pre-requisites to the WBL credit-bearing course in a career academy:

- Employability
- 21st century skills
- Technical training, including software, hardware, tools, machines, etc.
- Industry certifications necessary for the specific job (when applicable and/or available)
- Academic course alignment to the specific job and mastery of the academic standards required to do the job professionally
- Cross-curricular project-based learning reviewed by industry to demonstrate that students are ready for a real apprenticeship
- Job shadowing, career fair, industry tours, simulated workplace, pre-apprenticeships, etc.

Required Key Components of Career Academy WBL Experiences

1. Experiences must correlate with the student's individual success plan (ISP) and course of study (if enrolled in a CTE program). Process Standard 14.1.4 of the [Mississippi Public Accountability Standards](#) requires that all students participate in creating their [ISP](#) prior to exiting the seventh grade. The ISP is reviewed and updated annually to guide and document students' secondary and postsecondary goals.
2. Students must engage with a business or industry partner throughout their work experience. Students complete their required WBL hours at the business and/or the school site.
3. Completion of all required WBL documentation includes:
 - Training agreement for each student
 - Business or industry partner evaluations
 - Student reflections

In addition, the following key components are required for every WBL experience in which a student is placed for career academies:

- Course and worksite orientation
- Minimum of 70 work hours in a career training experience
- WBL coordinator with 917 add-on endorsement
- Digital professional portfolio that communicates the student's skills and strengths with business or industry partners and provides a platform for self-promotion and future employment
- Students are not allowed to receive grades in other courses and WBL hours simultaneously for the same work.
- Describe the value of the internship to younger students, peers, and adults
- Teacher externships should be prioritized for academic cohort teachers.
- Require exit reflections and surveys
- Require students to research the company to which they are assigned
- Present WBL activities to career academy advisory board

Career Academy WBL Coordinator

Qualifications:

The ideal candidate will hold the 917 WBL endorsement and be task oriented with demonstrated leadership experience, preferably in a professional setting. Evidence of organizational skills, project management, strong communication skills, and a desire to promote the academy model are required. Experience working with business, community agencies, and postsecondary institutions is preferred, and high school classroom experience is less important than the previously listed components.



Responsibilities of a Career Academy WBL Coordinator

- Serves as the contact person for business, community, and postsecondary engagement for academies regarding National Career Academy Coalition's National Standards of Practice (NSOP) 8
- Attends partnership, council, board, and other meetings for the purpose of networking, enhancing partnerships, and providing experiential learning opportunities for students. Many of these meetings, such as city council meetings, will occur outside the standard school hours. This should be taken into consideration when developing a WBL coordinator's schedule.
- Serves as the liaison between the school and district office in developing and sustaining work-based learning, including the submission of budgets, purchase orders, and other requested information and data. This should be coordinated with the academy directors.
- Implements the current academy's strategic plan concerning WBL in partnership with district and school leadership teams
- Supports the completion of action plans and calendars of events where WBL is involved
- Participates on all advisory boards of assigned academies in accordance with the advisory board bylaws
- Coordinates with business partners to maintain accurate community investment data for official business and community partner involvement
- Communicates academy information with the district communications office and outside media to enhance the WBL programs
- Coordinates academy-related experiential learning, including, but not limited to, field trips, job shadowing, student internships, teacher externships, and guest speakers
- Works with counselors, academy directors, and school administration to coordinate recruitment and registration of students for WBL in line with the students' ISP
- Collaborates with school administration and advisory board to review academy programs of study and recommend program modifications as needed
- Attends scheduled academy WBL meetings with students periodically throughout the school year as needed
- Works alongside the academy director to facilitate the organization and implementation of academy open houses and school tours
- Regularly attends academy team meetings to provide support and guidance for all academy initiatives
- Collects, analyzes, and communicates academy data (e.g., academy enrollment, experiential learning, industry certifications, academy-related dual credit/dual enrollment, attendance, graduation rate, etc.)
- Works with district and school administration on student engagement opportunities within and outside the school itself
- As directed by the district, engages in school leadership initiatives, such as reviewing the master scheduling of WBL students, serving on district/school leadership teams, and implementing/overseeing the WBL master plan
- Participates in onsite inspections before, during, and after all WBL experiences to defend the efficacy of the program and the safety of each student
- Oversees and maintains responsibility for the learning management system associated with the WBL program. This should be done in partnership with the academy director.



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