

WORK-BASED LEARNING WORKGROUP MEETING



Date: June 11, 2025

Time: 10-11 am

Location: Online

Room: [Zoom Link](#)

Members Present:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brent Parton | <input type="checkbox"/> Laura Love | <input type="checkbox"/> Taylor White |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Daniel Serota | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Erica Thieman | (proxy Lindsey Phillips) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Debbie Wasden | (proxy Abbi Barton) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Whitney Thompson |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jason Klein | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lazaro Lopez | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Heather Penczak (Ex-Officio) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Julio Rodriguez | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stephen Lefaver | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Larry Fitzpatrick | | |

Quorum: 6

Majority of Quorum: 4

Time

Welcome and Roll Call of Members

10:01 Mr. Antonio Gomez conducted role call of members to determine Quorum. Quorum was determined to be present.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Mr. Gomez called for a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes.

10:05 Jason Klein started the motion.

Stephen Lefaver seconded the motion.

Minutes were approved.

Review Current Draft Report

- 10:08
- **Review Illinois Data Section**
 - **Review Additions to Key Findings Section**
 - **Review Draft Recommendations**

Time

Mr. Gomez reminded the workgroup that the current version of the report is still in draft form and is not ready to be shared until more edits and reviews are made.

Ms. Jennifer Foil presented Title I data for DCEO on WBL learning from the last five years. This information will be included in the final version of the workgroup report. The information presented was gathered from IWDS (Illinois Workforce Development System).

Ms. Foil presented fiscal results at the state level, mentioning that it could be broken down into LWIA (Local Workforce Innovation Area) data if needed. The breakdown also categorized the types of WBL participants: apprenticeship, internship, job shadowing, paid work experience, pre apprenticeship training, OJT (On-the-Job Training), private sector OJT, public sector OJT, unpaid work experience and funding. Results shared were from program years 2017 to 2023.

10:09

Pre-apprenticeship participation has been stagnant, but apprenticeships have continued to see an increase year-over-year.

Ms. Foil reported employers did not utilize the full amount of tax incentives available to them for WBL opportunities. This has been a point of discussion on why employers do not take full advantage of these credits. Exploration of other avenues to incentivize businesses is needed. Ms. Foil has asked if there was any data that showed what employers utilized these tax incentives to identify trends.

Ms. Foil further notes these numbers did not reflect every Title I funding avenues, such as JTED (Job Training and Economic Development) and apprenticeship expansion grants.

Ms. Foil opened the floor for questions after presenting.

10:15

Workgroup members asked if there was any way to correlate these numbers with effectiveness. What is the return on investment per dollar spent.

- How do we know if a program is successful?
- Did it actually help individuals?

Time

- Mr. Jason Klein noted there is funding being sought in order to repeat this research annually to look at trends statewide and regionally.
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- 10:17 Ms. Foil asked the workgroup for guidance on what data would be helpful to determine recommendations for the state of Illinois.
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- Mr. Lazaro Lopez asked if there was ISBE (Illinois State Board of Education) data that would be beneficial to combine with the data presented, and if that was available.
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- 10:18 Mr. Lopez also asked for clarification on the average dollars spent per individual as the charts were unclear in the presentation. There was speculation that some of the data discrepancies that occurred could have been a variance in how the information was logged at the local level.
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- 10:19 Ms. Whitney Thompson stated it would be interesting to see the wage data for those involved in apprenticeships post-graduation vs those not involved in apprenticeships since WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) tracks this information.
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- 10:20 Mr. Larry Fitzpatrick asked if data was broken down by local area, which was confirmed by Ms. Foil. Mr. Fitzpatrick also noted that LWIA's can opt-out of certain WBL approaches, which can have positive and negative aspects.
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- 10:21 Ms. Heather Penczak asked why employers did not take the additional incentive funding? Ms. Foil stated non-profits are not eligible; only tax-paying entities. Ms. Foil further noted the application process can be seen as cumbersome. Mr. Fitzpatrick stated businesses may not be aware of the credit, which could be something workforce professionals could do better at marketing.
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- 10:24 Mr. Jordan Johnson highlighted the additions to the draft report. Mr. Johnson explained the employer incentive section, with the additions of the categories on Administrative, Barriers to Growth, and Incentives.
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- 10:32 Ms. Thompson pointed out the phrasing on the point calling for industry-created standards was currently confusing.

Time

Ms. Erica Thieman expressed wanting to know more about what the HR process looks like.

10:25

Mr. Johnson moved onto the Recommendations section of the draft report. Mr. Johnson discussed two layout options, with the workgroup preferring "Version B" presented on screen.

Mr. Gomez transitioned to: Discussion on the definition of internships.

Mr. Fitzpatrick requested that internships be left up to businesses to define.

Mr. Klien requested "internship" be added to the section header. He stated it may help suggest definitions of what an internship might be for employers, and to define while still having a clear range of what they could include.

10:39

Ms. Thieman stated if the group will be collecting data on an item, there needs to be clear definitions otherwise data is at risk.

Mr. Lopez stated the Career Pathways Dictionary defines the internships already. He asked for bullet pointed information on internships that could be offered to youth and also how they connect to apprenticeships.

Ms. Thompson encouraged not making a separate LDS (Longitudinal Data System) for WBL data.

Mr. Klein noted that given the current progress of ILDS, having a WBL database could be useful.

10:44

Mr. Johnson, asked the group if the current bullets points are good calls to action, or are they too vague and needing to be expanded?

Mr. Lopez asked if there is an outcome or completion data for apprenticeships?

Time

Ms. Foil reported some data was put out in 2020 and again in the report with Mr. Jason Klein earlier this year. Ms. Foil noted they will be able to dive deeper into RAPIDS (Registered Apprenticeship Partners Information Database System) data this summer with new staff.

10:46

Mr. Lopez stated Illinois adopted a minimum standard for youth apprenticeship framework as a board, but it has not been widely implemented. Mr. Lopez noted the next action step could be the adoption of or a more widespread use in Illinois.

10:48

Mr. Klein discussed the career counseling capacity and accurate portrayal of the job market to students is largely a professional development issue.

Ms. Thompson questioned if it is only the career counselor's job to give this data? What other partners (employers, college CTE) could aid this work?

10:52

Ms. Thompson further stated the wording could make it seem like employer partnerships are missing from Community Colleges.

Public Comment

Mr. Gomez opened the floor for public comment. There was none.

Mr. Gomez noted the time and encouraged members to always email feedback following discussions. Mr. Gomez transitioned to giving an overview of project plan timeline.

10:55

Mr. Gomez discussed there is a plan to have employer engagement event in July, to incorporate feedback, and have the WBLA committee review in late July. Mr. Gomez stated the Executive Committee will review the information in August, with the IWIB and WBLA doing a final approval in September.

Ms. Thompson highly encouraged bringing in the whole workforce ecosystem together rather than identifying any perceived divides among universities, community colleges or the workforce system.

Time

10:59

Adjourn

DRAFT