

## Employer Participation Options

### Why Work-Based Learning?

There are One Million middle skills jobs in New York City and 46% of New Yorkers lack the skills to fill them. These are occupations that require education after high school but not a four-year degree. Work-based learning activities that help students make informed choices, plan their educational pathway and provide actionable steps to take after high school are vital to student achievement and ultimately a positive connection to the labor force.

NYC Public Schools' approach in supporting students in career-related programs of study is the deliberate focus on the three facets of student achievement needed for success in the labor force: the acquisition of academic, technical and core employability skills. Regardless of industry, employers consistently underscore that students must have experience and mastery in all three areas, with a growing priority on the development of employability skills. Alongside efforts to enhance the rigor and effectiveness of classroom instruction, the approach requires new ways to deliver authentic workplace experiences such as Career Days, Workplace Tours, Mock Interviews and Internships in partnership with employers. In some cases, these experiences can be delivered virtually with employer partners visiting remote classrooms or connecting with students over online platforms.

Quality Work-Based Learning includes virtual options for most activities. Virtual WBL activities promote “live” student contact with adult professionals and front-line workers via the use of technology. Other virtual activities are generally simulations that provide students with employer exposures through recordings, online research and related classroom activities.

### What are the benefits of my company's participation?

Partnering with the New York City schools offers an effective and appropriate vehicle for employers to help build and retain their future workforce. By opening their place of business to students and providing them with high-value Work-Based Learning opportunities, employers are able to expose students to their business and industry and benefit from productive student work. You can observe potential future employees in a “long-term interview” context and participate in shaping your future workforce by connecting with teachers and participating in the classroom. Students also provide access to a customer resource and a fresh point of view.

Your workplace benefits from a more productive and engaged workforce and by helping build leadership and supervisory skills among your current workers. Partnering with the Career Pathways effort provides a win-win opportunity for companies to support and develop highly skilled and productive employees. It also helps build awareness of your company's role in the community and offers a public relations benefit.

### Why is this important for students, schools and my community?

- **It fast tracks students to their personal career goals.** Students pursue their education focused on their long-term goals. They graduate with a high school diploma, direct

workplace experience with partner employers and a firm foundation for entry into the workforce or future educational and training opportunities.

- **It promotes better outcomes for schools and increases high school graduation and college completion rates.** This approach helps schools deliver a 21<sup>st</sup> century education. The school structure provides multiple pathways for students, incentives for project-based and applied learning, and opportunities for cross-disciplinary integration in the classroom. It offers students the chance to explore a career path while preparing them to become contributing members of their community. And it expands the school’s awareness of the economy and increases educator knowledge of area businesses and jobs as well as an understanding of the challenges industry faces.
- **It strengthens communities.** It helps align education, workforce and service systems to promote a strong economic future and build an engaged citizenry. It provides a robust local talent pipeline and helps the local economy grow and retain a workforce.

### How can my company participate?

There are many ways in which you can partner with us. While employer involvement in each of the following activities is critical to our success, employer partners are not expected to participate in all activities. Work-based learning coordinators or our intermediary partners work with you to help select the activities that make the most sense for your business. Here are some options to consider:

- Serve on an Industry Commission
- Help us map the skills needed for high demand occupations in your industry
- Provide Work-Based Learning opportunities for students. These may include:
  - **Guest Speaker** – A group of students listen to a presentation to learn about the speaker’s organization, careers and industry and ask questions to help them consider whether they might like to pursue an opportunity in the industry.
  - **Career Day** – Business partners from a variety of companies come together at a school to share information about their company, their job and the education and skills required for success in careers in the industry.
  - **Career Mentoring** – A student is matched one-on-one or in small groups with an adult professional to explore potential careers and related educational issues.
  - **Workplace Tour** – Small groups of students visit a workplace, learn about the business, meet employees, ask questions and observe work in progress. Teachers also benefit from exposure to the workplace.
  - **Informational Interview** – A student formally interviews an employer partner about his or her industry, educational and career path and chosen profession.
  - **Job Shadowing** – A student is paired with an employee of a host company and follows that employee during much of a regular workday. A job shadow provides students the opportunity to experience the workplace, understand the various roles and duties of a

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- particular occupation, learn about the business, connect with a working adult and observe work in progress.
- **Mock Interview** – Students are paired one-on-one with a business partner who interviews each student as if he/she were being interviewed by an employer for a paid internship or job.
  - **Workplace Challenge** – Small groups of students (four to six per team) are engaged in a problem-solving exercise issued by an employer in consultation with a school teacher.
  - **Internship** – A student has the opportunity to learn by doing real work and being productively engaged in the workplace. Students may work individually, in teams, work on a project, or rotate through a number of departments and job functions.
  - **Work Experience** – An opportunity for a student to develop and demonstrate professional and occupational skills by addressing a core business function and doing productive work with an employer.

**We make it easy for you to get involved.**

We offer strategies and support to limit the burden on employers and increase the educational value of these experiences for students. All workplace experiences are highly structured and supported by staff. While the full range of authentic work-based learning experiences is provided to every student, employer partners provide those opportunities that are a good fit with their business.