

Tools for Traveling the Work-Based Learning Continuum

As students learn about different careers, they discover their strengths, interests, and passions. Students draw on the tools they develop in the early stages of their academic career throughout their journey along the continuum.



Career Awareness

Grades Pre-K–3



- Interest surveys
- Diverse classroom career activities
- Job talks from a variety of employers

I know the different careers that serve my community, and some of the careers interest me. I'm learning how school prepares me for work.



Lower elementary: Teachers provide most of the work-based learning instruction, including collaborating with counselors and employers to coordinate career learning experiences.



Career Exploration

Grade 4

- Career fairs
- Workplace tours

Grade 5

- Structured career exploration lessons
- Job shadows
- Informational interviews

Grade 6

- School-based enterprises
- Counseling

Grades 7–8

- Career and technical student organizations



I get to explore different careers in different ways and can make educational plans for the ones that interest me the most.



Upper elementary: Teachers are still students' main point of contact for work-based learning experiences, but schools and counselors also work with employers to offer more in-depth opportunities to explore careers.

Middle school: Students begin to have more autonomy over their choices and exposure to certain careers. Teachers and counselors facilitate, guide, and encourage students to explore a range of options.



Career Preparation

Grade 9

- Simulated work-based learning
- Career and technical education

Grade 10

- Job-seeking training



I participate in programs to prepare for the career paths that interest me, and I gain experience in those career paths through work-based learning opportunities.



Early high school: Students choose from a menu of work-based learning options curated by teachers, counselors, and employers. Students begin to engage in work-based learning that is run entirely by employers.



Career Seeking and Advancement

Grade 11

- Job applications
- Apprenticeships
- Internships

Grade 12

- Industry-mentored capstone projects
- Job training



Postsecondary

- Job experience
- Short-term career training programs
- Two-year college job certificate programs
- Four-year college degree programs
- Military service and training

I continue to fine-tune my career and postsecondary education plans. I know how to align my career plans to my financial and personal life goals. I am building a resume based on excellent job performance.



Mid-high school: Students select jobs that align with their career goals, often with advice from counselors, teachers, or employers.

Late high school and postsecondary: Teachers offer courses aligned with employers' needs. Employers offer internships that prepare students for specific careers. Students participate in counseling.