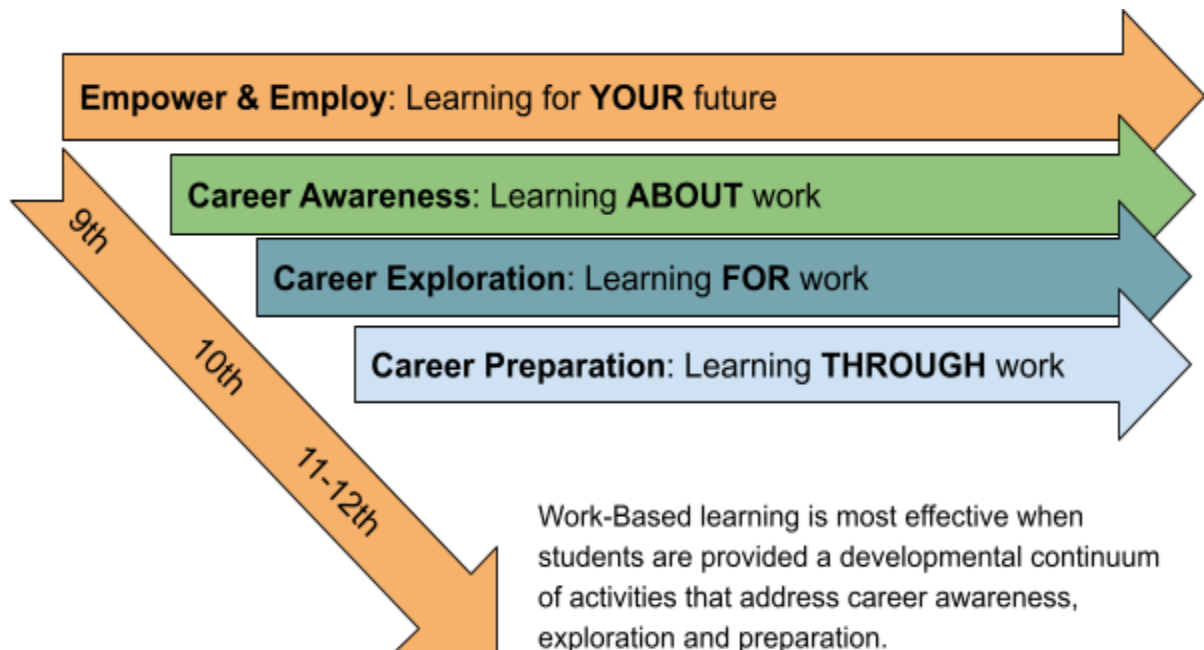


## Work-Based Learning Program Procedures and Information



# What is Work-based Learning (WBL)?

*“Work-based learning is a structured educational program which provides students with instruction at both the school and at an employer work-site. Work-based learning experiences help students see the connection between the classroom and potential future careers, and they assist students in becoming career and college-ready.” (MDE Handbook)*

Work-Based Learning programs are approved career and technical education programs that provide students with disabilities, ages 16-22, the opportunity to develop work readiness skills and participate in competitive, integrated employment. In this program, students participate in both a career seminar course and at work experience under the supervision of a licensed Work-Based Learning Coordinator.

Work-Based Learning is a key component of transition planning for students who are served through special education, including adult learners 18-22 years of age. Work-Based Learning offers these students a variety of benefits as they make plans for postsecondary training and employment. A Work-Based Learning Coordinator may be involved in the transition planning of youth with disabilities by attending meetings and collaborating with IEP teams.

# Special Education WBL Coordinators

The NLSEC has three WBL Coordinators on staff in the program to serve the 12 member school districts, dividing services as reasonable and appropriate.

**The WBL Coordinators have key responsibilities within the specific aspects of the program:**

## **Program Development**

- In collaboration with IEP managers, configure a work schedule that fits in with student's academic load and employer needs.
- In collaboration with IEP managers, design and deliver the school-based career seminar course, including instruction on career exploration, safety, and employee rights.
- Design and implement a process for accepting students into the Work-Based Learning program
- Recruit employers to participate in the Work-Based Learning program
- Secure suitable worksites for students

## **Program Management**

- Develop partnerships with employer partners
- Coordinate the Work-Based Learning advisory committee
- Confirm logistics, parent/guardian permission and emergency contact information
- Partner with employers and students to finalize an individual training agreement and training plan
- Assist in the facilitation of onboarding Vocational Rehabilitation Services, if appropriate.

## **Program Supervision**

- Review worksite responsibilities with the student and employer
- Conduct worksite visits to ensure the workplace is a safe and appropriate environment
- Monitor and track students' work experience hours
- Encourage students to share information regarding supports and accommodations needed to be successful in the workplace
- Maintain communication with employer
- Follow-up on any concerns or questions raised by the student, parent/guardian, or employer

## **Program Evaluation**

- Evaluate student progress on individual training plan
- Collect documentation and submit reports as required by school district
- Coordinate the evaluation of the Work-Based Learning program yearly and make changes as needed

## **Program Marketing**

- Work with school administrators and school counselors to ensure the program is included in the class schedule
- Create promotional materials
- Promote the program to parents, students, teachers and employer partners

## **The IEP Case Manager has key responsibilities regarding WBL program for their students:**

- Invite WBL Coordinator to IEP meetings, and if appropriate, VRS Counselor/Representative.
- Keep open communication with WBL Coordinators when issues or concerns arise with students, such as truancy, illnesses, behavior, due process timelines, etc.
- In collaboration with WBL Coordinator, configure necessary transportation to get to and from work.
- In collaboration with WBL Coordinator complete necessary due process paperwork
- Assign and schedule a paraprofessional to be a job coach for student(s). Collaborate with WBL Coordinator on job coach performance and problem solve if necessary.
- In collaboration with WBL Coordinator complete necessary WBL paperwork:
  - WBL Application -WBL Coordinators will meet with potentially eligible students to either complete the application or review completed applications prior to placement.
  - WBL Training Agreement -requires Student, Parent, Employer, and WBL Coordinator signature. IEP Manager may be required to assist WBL Coordinator in attaining parent and student signatures and return to WBL Coordinator.
  - WBL Progress Report - will be completed by the WBL Coordinator but IEP manager will provide documentation to parents/family.
- Communicate and give documentation of any behavior plans or medical needs (seizure, diabetes, allergies, etc) to the WBL Coordinator.

*\*\*Please make sure to connect with your WBL Coordinator as soon as you think the student needs employment support or skills instruction.*

## **The NLSEC Director of Special Education has key responsibilities regarding the WBL program for its member school districts.**

- Approval of WBL courses and licensure
- Active participant in planning and development of programming
- Ensure WBL approval process is accurate and meets MDE's requirements
- Assist with marketing program and making community connections
- Support special education teams as necessary.

## **NLSEC WBL Coordinators also participate in additional activities throughout the school year on behalf of the program, including but not limited to:**

- WBL Advisory Board facilitation and participation
- Professional Development opportunities hosted by the NLSEC for special education teachers and other staff to learn more about WBL and Secondary Transition
- State/MDE level work groups, cohorts, etc.
- Northern Lights Interagency Council and appropriate subcommittees
- Mentoring Day planning and facilitation

# IEP Documentation

WBL special education services are documented in an IEP in various places, but the important thing is that the individual plan for each student reflects their needs, programming, and support, including work experience and seminar.

The Work Based Learning Coordinator will collaborate with the IEP manager to ensure service time is documented on the student's IEP.

## Present Levels of Performance (PLAAFP):

The current information regarding student interests and what has been tried before or is currently happening in the area of work or work skills, should be included in the PLAAFP. In addition, the PLAAFP should include past progress and/or baseline information.

**POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION & TRAINING:**  
 Billy indicates his school year is going well; he enjoys his classes and is doing better with peers. He continues to feel math and reading can be difficult at times, and still struggles with social interaction with peers. Billy uses accommodations in his classes to help him be successful, and indicates talking with his case manager helps him during the school day. Billy reports he has Autism, which makes social interaction difficult for him. Ten years from now Billy would like to work in the field of graphic design. He would like more information about how to apply to college and ways to pay for it.

**EMPLOYMENT:**  
 Billy reports he has never had a job, filled out an application, or had a job interview. He believes he probably has a social security card, but does not know where it is located. Billy has not had much volunteer or job experience. He has watched his sister and reports it was required, but not too enjoyable for him. Billy has been participating in work experience for first semester. He has been working at Best Buy stocking shelves on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 12:30-2:30. According to his most recent progress report, he has extremely good attendance, follows directions 85% if the time. At times he struggles with written instructions and needs to have it re-explained or shown to him. Billy demonstrates some difficulty with communication skills, particularly if a customer approaches him and asks a questions. He has a hard time making eye contact or demonstrating appropriate etiquette without appearing, as some would describe, "rude." Billy's job coach has been working with him on how to appropriately speak/respond to customers and making eye contact through the use of social stories. Billy would like to get a job this summer to earn money for driver's education. He indicates he would like to work at a job that is not too social; possibly stocking shelves at a local store. Billy feels his job-related strengths are that he is punctual and follows directions well. Billy indicates he does not like being around people and would prefer a job where interactions with the public are minimal. In the future, Billy would like a job where he can do art and use the computer, possibly a career in graphic design. Billy continues to demonstrate the need to participate in work based learning to increase his employment readiness skills, appropriate use of social communication skills, and interpersonal skills.

**INDEPENDENT LIVING:**  
**Home Living:** Billy is able to make simple meals for himself, including macaroni & cheese, waffles, and pizza. He indicates he goes grocery shopping with his mom or dad and occasionally makes independent purchases of milk or eggs at the local gas station. Billy reports he would like to move away from home around age 22, once he has completed college courses and has a job. He is able to correctly estimate the cost of a one bedroom apartment. Billy is responsible for managing his own money, does not have a checking account, and is unsure whether he has a savings account. Billy reports he does not know how to write checks or balance a checkbook. Billy occasionally uses his parents credit cards for small purchases; he must get permission before using one. Billy is aware of emergency services, and indicates he knows who to contact in case of an emergency. Billy has an alarm clock but typically needs help from his mom to get up in the morning. Billy reports he has observed his mom doing laundry, but does not do his own at this time.  
**Community Participation:** Billy rides the bus to school and accesses his community by asking his parents for a ride, walking, or riding his bike. He is familiar with popular places in his community and indicates he knows how to access them. Billy does not have his driver's license and hopes to take the class this summer if he is able to save money to take it.  
**Recreation & Leisure:** Billy indicates he does not participate in any extra-curricular activities and prefers indoor activities such as playing video games, watching TV, drawing, and using the computer. Billy indicates he has one or two close friends and that it is difficult for him to get to know people. In his free time Billy reports he enjoys playing video games and watching TV. Billy feels one thing he does well is drawing.

## Service Scenarios and How to Document in the IEP on the Service Grid:

*(Make sure to connect with your WBL Coordinator on the services)*

Special Education and Related Services (primarily direct instruction and services)						
Statements of Special Education and related services	Start date	Frequency	Minutes per session		Location	Anticipated duration
			Indirect	Direct		
DCD-Mild/Moderate: Career Seminar	12/08/2020	1/month	10	50	Special Education Classroom	1 year
DCD-Mild/Moderate: Work Based Learning	11/10/2022	1/month	20	10	Job Site	1 year
DCD-Mild/Moderate: Transitional Workplace Skills	11/10/2022	3/week	10	50	PAES Lab	1 year

## Changes mid-year:

WBL Coordinators will work with the IEP manager to ensure services are adequately reflected in IEP. If services are missed in the documentation or not removed if needed (such as at semester), work with the IEP manager to amend the IEP or add in at the next meeting if coming up, whatever makes sense.

## Transportation Language

A variety of staff in districts may set up transportation for the student to/from the job site. Sometimes, the WBL coordinator can support this in various ways.

In the transportation section of the IEP, document that the “student needs special transportation to get to/from their WBL job site.”

***For MARSS accuracy, these students need to be coded a 3.***

If students are transporting themselves to their WBL, IEP managers should refer back to their district’s policies and procedures on student driving and documentation needed, such as insurance information.

## Annual Goal/Objectives

Most often when a student participates in WBL there is an identified need by the team that the student needs to increase a skill related to employment. This need can either be addressed as a separate WBL goal or as an objective associated with another goal. Many goals that a student is typically working on in school/academic settings can be applied to work experience, such as communication skills, behavior management, time management, organization, etc.

Data Collection typically comes from the WBL progress reports. These are completed at the same frequency as district grade reporting. Progress reports can be a collaborative effort (depending on student need) between the WBL Coordinator, job coach, and employer.

## Transition Pages:

If a student is taking Work-Based Learning for credit, it needs to be documented in the course of study section of the student’s transition plan as Work-Based Learning.

- Career Seminar course should be in conjunction with WBL or before participating in work experience.

B. Courses of Study		
School Year:	Grade Level:	Course to be taken:
2019-2020	Grade 9	Algebra, Civics, Physical Science, Welding 1, Resource English, Physical Education
2020-2021	Grade 10	Geometry, American History, Welding 2 (subst for 1 cr. of Biology), Resource English, Health, Art, <b>Work Experience</b> , <b>Career Seminar</b>
2021-2022	Grade 11	Algebra 2, Construction 1 (subst. for 1 credit of Science Elective), Resource English, Life Skills, <b>Career Seminar</b> , <b>Work Experience</b>

## Comments:


\*\*Work based learning will be substituted for 1 credit of World History.

- If the student is participating in a transition activity separate or in addition to Work-Based Learning for credit, it should be documented in the transition services section as a Community Experience. *(Below is a visual of how to include WBL, VRS, and other job readiness activities).*

<b>C. Transition Services</b>	
<b>Instruction (i.e. specialized instruction, regular instruction, career and technical education):</b>	
Activity	Agency Providing Service on the IEP
Bob will increase his career awareness by completing various interest inventories.	
or	School
Bob will participate in a job shadow experience to increase his knowledge of skills needed for becoming an iron-worker.	
Bob will participate in Work Based Learning and Career Seminar course during 2nd semester to improve his career development, communication and self-initiative skills.	NLSEC, School
<b>Related services:</b>	
Activity	Agency Providing Service on the IEP
Bob will work with his VRS Pre-ETS Counselor on career exploration, postsecondary counseling, and self-advocacy skills.	VRS
Bob will participate in Work Based Learning in the community setting.	
or	NLSEC/School
Bob will participate in Work Based Learning in the school setting.	
<b>Community participation:</b>	
Activity	Agency Providing Service on the IEP
Bob will participate in Work Based Learning in the community setting.	NLSEC/School
<b>The development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives:</b>	
Activity	Agency Providing Service on the IEP
Bob will work with his VRS Pre-ETS Counselor on career exploration, postsecondary counseling, and self-advocacy skills.	VRS
Bob will discuss and identify disability, accommodations and modifications needed related to employment.	School
Bob will increase his self-advocacy and self-initiation skills related to work tasks.	School/NLSEC
<b>If appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and provision of a functional vocational evaluation:</b>	
Activity	Agency Providing Service on the IEP
Bob will participate in the Discovery Assessment with VRS.	VRS

### Program Accommodations/Modifications page:

A student may need accommodations or modifications to support their Work-Based Learning program. These should be documented in the IEP on this page. An example of how this should be documented is below.

 <p><b>Northern Lights Academy Cooperative</b> 302 14th Street Cloquet MN 55720-5720 Tel 218-878-3060</p>	<p><b>ACCOMMODATIONS, MODIFICATIONS AND SUPPORTS</b></p>
	<p><b>MODIFICATIONS</b></p> <p><b>Program Modifications, Supports and Adaptations in General and Special Education</b></p> <p>Work Experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Phil needs written or visual instructions for job tasks to be completed versus verbal instruction.</li> <li>-all adults involved in Phil's work experience need to allow him extra time for processing information (i.e. directions, instructions).</li> <li>-Phil needs to be allowed up to 5 minute sensory breaks once an hour during his work times.</li> </ul>

## Assistive Technology Needs:

The team should consider any assistive technology a student may need to make the work setting accessible and functional. Examples of AT tools could be; fidgets, noise-canceling headphones, communication devices, visual schedules, switches, apparatus to assist students in job completion, etc. Your WBL Coordinator, OT, and VRS Counselor can assist with identifying these.

## Least Restrictive Environment:

The actual work experience is considered a general education setting. If that's a substitution for typical academic classes, that needs to be reflected in the transition pages of the IEP. It does **not** need to be explained in the LRE.

However, when a student is taking a career seminar/transition course through special education, learning about pre-employment, and workplace readiness skills, that will need to be explained in the LRE as a substitution for a general education class.

## Sample LRE:

*Student will miss blank class in order to receive their specialized instruction in a career seminar/transition class. Student will work on increasing their employability skills to work towards attaining and maintaining a job.*

## Paraprofessional Support/Job Coach:

In certain circumstances, students may need additional support while participating in work experience. That may be in the form of having a paraprofessional act as a job coach. WBL Coordinators will work in conjunction with the paraprofessional to train them on being a job coach for that particular student. Some of the responsibilities that a job coach might perform are:

- Work with the employee/student to discuss goals and plans for their work experience.
- Help the employee/student to self-identify skill deficits to work on.
- Engage the employee/student and guide them toward self-advocacy and self-determination.
- Communicate with the WBL Coordinator on progress of student, particularly if there are concerns of work performance.
- Help the employee/student with soft skills such as social skills and communication.
- Ensure that supports and/or accommodations are being followed.
- Help employee/student stay motivated through difficult times.
- Teach job skills to the employee/student.
- Support student on fine-tuning work habits/skills in preparation for competitive employment.

Job Coach support should be documented in the IEP under the paraprofessional. See example below:

Paraprofessional Support					
Unless otherwise stated, all services and supports are for the anticipated duration of the IEP.					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes					
Type of Paraprofessional Support	Start date	Frequency	Minutes per session	Location	Anticipated duration
Job Coach	05/19/2023	3/week	180	Job Site	1 year
Bob needs paraprofessional/job coach support due to his vulnerability and safety while participating in work experience. Due to his disability, Bob has difficulty communicating his needs as well as understanding boundaries and interpersonal skills.					



## **Work-Based Learning (WBL) Program 10 Focus Areas (Progress Report)**

### ***Follows Instructions***

- Able to follow written/visual and verbal Instructions
- Able to follow signal step directions
- Able to follow simple multi-step directions

### ***Attitude - Towards Co-workers & Supervisors***

- Cooperative
- Respectful
- Positive
- Appropriate
- Even during tough times

### ***Quantity of Work***

- Speed/productivity is acceptable to above average

### ***Quality of Work***

- Work is consistently accurate and rarely contains errors or is error-free

### ***Appearance***

- Professionalism
- Usually or always dresses appropriately, avoids distracting behavior, and avoids excessive personal use of equipment such as cell phones, iPods etc.
- Follow Student Handbook guidelines regarding devices

### ***Attendance & Dependability***

- Routinely uses time well
- Limited procrastination
- Always arrives on time and is always ready to work immediately upon arrival
- Follows WBL contract expectations
- Follow Student Handbook expectations

### ***Cooperation***

- Usually listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others.
- Works well with most others, including employees, supervisors and customers.

### ***Communication***

- Talks with Supervisor about ideas and problems.
- Asks questions and actively listens.

### ***Initiative***

- Usually a self-starter
- Seeks challenges
- Asks for more work and finds additional work to complete

### ***Leadership***

- Taking initiative on the job site
- Assisting co-workers with job tasks without being asked
- Share new ideas or ways to do things differently

# Agency Collaboration

NLSEC WBL Coordinators and Member School Districts often collaborate with counselors from other agencies that support students and people with disabilities to gain employment. This collaboration happens throughout the school year.

Your WBL Coordinator should be the main point of contact to connect with either VRS or JET and/or support you in determining which agency would best support your student. To see a visual representation, please see [Visual One Pager](#) for VRS, SSB and JET options.

## **Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS)**

With the right training, preparation and workplace accommodations, people with disabilities can have rewarding careers. Minnesota's Vocational Rehabilitation Services unit can help people prepare for, find and keep a job, and live as independently as possible.

As an agency of the MN Employment and Economic Development state department, VRS supports MN high school students. [Vocational Rehabilitation Services \(VRS\)](#) has 2 staff members assigned to every high school. They help students with disabilities plan the journey from school to what comes next. [Find the VRS staff assigned to your school](#)

VRS Student Career Services help students discover their strengths, interests, preferences and needs, complete career and postsecondary counseling, and assist in developing an employment plan.

## **JET (NE Minnesota Office of Job Training)**

JET (formerly known as Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training (NEMOJT)). JET serves job seekers, including dislocated workers, people wishing to enter or reenter the workforce, youth, and adults interested in training and education. Services include career planning and exploration, personalized job search strategies, funding for postsecondary education, and financial resources to support job search activities.

## **State Services for the Blind (SSB)**

Several Minnesota organizations offer programs to provide blind, DeafBlind or low vision students with the skills, confidence, and experience needed to succeed in life and work. SSB has several summer work opportunities available for blind, DeafBlind, and visually impaired students. These work-based Learning Experiences are open to students between 14-21 who are enrolled in an educational program. Available positions include peer educator positions, and a communications associate. In addition to summertime programs, these organizations offer experience-based programming that runs throughout the school year.

# Program Forms

There are specific forms that have been developed to accompany the program:

[Individual Training Agreement/Plan](#)

[Application for Work-Based Learning Application](#) w/Student Contract

[Work Experience Employer Evaluation/Progress Report](#)

[WBL Pamphlet](#)

[NLSEC WBL Advisory Committee](#)