**Work-based Learning Workgroup Meeting Notes**

October 9, 2019

Icebreaker

What single action could the state take to most significantly scale the number of Oregon students who have meaningful work-based learning experiences?

* Invest at the staff level (increase resources and HR capacity needed to create work-based learning experiences)
* Investment in local folks (workforce boards)
  + A lot of the barriers to scaling work-based learning derive from capacity issues
* Invest in funding and training local staff to implement the experiences
* Allow students to earn while they learn
* Greater integration in the employer community
* Work with teachers and facilitate meaningful engagement with business and industry
* Prioritize work-based learning locally
  + Make it a mandatory component instead of an optional component
* Invest strategically in work-based learning
  + Long-term work-based learning opportunities for underserved populations
* Hire a consultant
* Work-based learning should be a part of all curriculum
* Market to the general public
* Address postsecondary and secondary education needs
  + Provide training around the differences in postsecondary and secondary
  + Get stakeholders at the table to discuss challenges
* Invest in positions to liaison between education and business/industry
* Invest in incentivizing employer and business/industry to participate
* Ensure that career readiness skills in work-based learning are called out
* Ensure the community, parents, and students understand what the work-based learning opportunities are and what they look like in practice

Workgroup Objectives

* Develop a common definition of work-based learning and related elements for Oregon, including descriptions of purposes of work-based learning at different learner levels (including middle school, high school and postsecondary).
* Determine if any changes need to be made to the current data collection around work-based learning for high school graduation. If so, develop a proposal for those changes.
* If the accountability workgroup selects work-based learning as the secondary program quality measure, work with that group to provide input into suggested numerator, denominator, measurement approaches and performance target.
* **Finalize recommendations for improving work-based learning using the Perkins V state plan, such as:**
  + **Areas that must be addressed in the state plan;**
  + **Incorporation into program of study approval;**
  + **Potential uses of leadership and reserve funds; and**
  + **Questions to include in the comprehensive local needs assessment and the local application.**
* **Develop suggestions for state TA and professional development related to work-based learning.**
* **Develop suggestions for engaging more employers around work-based learning.**

Key Impacts

* Work-based learning selected as secondary program quality measure for Perkins accountability
* Elements of measurement definitions drawn from group’s feedback
* Work-based learning lifted up as key area of cross-agency collaboration

State Identified Work-based Learning Activities

* ODE identified 5-6 work-based learning activities
  + Provided definitions for work-based learning, workplace simulation/technology-based learning, clinical/practicum, school-based enterprise, cooperative work experience, etc.
* Service learning will not count as work-based learning. There were concerns about the following as it relates to service learning:
  + Sustained interaction with industry and community partners
  + Connection to the classroom
  + Ability to bear credit
  + Length of time the actual service learning experience happens

Expanding on Recommendations

Engage Employers

*What are the biggest barriers to employer participation in work-based learning?*

* Time
  + Time is equal to money
  + Unknowns: How long is this going to take? (from conception to implementation)
* Work-based learning is not prioritized
* Engaging schools
* Paperwork
* Small, mid-size companies wear multiple hats
* Lack of understanding
* Lack of coordination
* Communication
* Multiple requests
* General “language divide” between education/business
* Education institutions lack the capacity to follow-up, articulate college and career ready skills to industry, and articulate what it means to be a work-ready? (across all age gaps)
* State/local requirements:
  + Varies across SD’s?
  + Curating more barriers?
  + Experiences/hours
  + No guidelines
  + Lack of consistency with everything
* Messaging not employer friendly
* Finding the champion with decision-making authority- need to access decision makers
  + Big organizations
    - Desire to help but have limited flexibility because of regulations/policies
  + Small organizations
    - Shoulder the task and take on the work, but may not be the best equipped to facilitate work-based learning because of capacity issues
* Knowing how to communicate and set up programs
* No clear path on how to offset cost, such as with tax credits
* Tracking certifications
* Need mentorship and work-based piece
* Specific postsecondary work-based learning barriers:
  + Transportation
  + Child care
  + Current low-wage jobs
  + Too many unpaid internships
  + Lack of coordination and capacity or perceived lack of value
  + Paperwork/process; lack of clarity and support
* Solution to barriers:
  + ODE and BOLI should collaborate to provide guidance, clarification, frequently asked questions and deeper documents
  + Tie incentives for policy alignment and collaboration to fund opportunities
    - Establish requirements to work with all entities with flexibility for implementation
  + Sustained funding
  + Make it mandatory to offer work-based learning
  + Work in better coordination with Governor’s office and legislature
  + Coordinated case management
  + Convene cross-represented teams to share promising practices and take them back to their campuses
  + Share best practices occurring among businesses in addressing these barriers

*If the state were to provide handbooks, guidance, etc targeted toward employers, what key topics should be covered?*

* Barriers to employers and participants?
* Choice for wages/cost of living
* Support: childcare, transportation, etc.
* More likely to “pay” with direct correlation with employer benefits
* Retention/cultivating new workforce
* Youth-tied to learning, adults tied to keeping talent
* Shared learning outcomes
  + Program specific
  + Metrics (accountability)
* Technical assistance for “youth in the workplace”
* Shared language/terminology
* Multiagency/industry-led handbook (Workforce, K-12, postsecondary)
  + Governor/legislature champion this
* Webinars and central portal for easy access
* What do you need from employers? What does it look like?
* What are the goals?
* Help employers find “intern”- process for vetting and points of contact
* Models/connections to champion
* Connection of work-based learning to career and employment

*What is the “value proposition” for employer participation? What messages need to be elevated?*

* Skill building
* Advancement
* Mutual benefits for:
  + Employers
  + Learners/job seekers
* Cost of onboarding, recruitment and training
  + Case studies: work-based learning experiences that transitioned to employment
* Not as burdensome
* A continuum of learning by doing...to earning and learning
* Grow diversity of the workforce
* Incentives beyond money
* Brand loyalty- acknowledge experiences as life/career
* Time, effort (support), cost
  + Taxes/policy
  + Competitiveness
  + Build training program/session
  + Community visibility
  + Tiered system
  + Long-term
* Acknowledgment of champions

Create a statewide communications network/website

* Repository (one-way interaction) is a good starting place
* Repository topics
  + Data
  + Clear interface for user interaction
    - Parents and students
      * Frequently asked questions
      * Options and how to access them
      * Local contacts/regional contacts
    - Business/employers
      * Training videos
      * Place to “become certified”
      * Regional links/workforce boards
    - Educators/facilitators (separate)
    - Industry associations
* State sets up interface but doesn’t manage it
* Suggestion: Network/Website should serve three purposes:
  + Centralized hub for forms/policy/opportunities
  + Interactive space for all stakeholders
  + Networking hub for employers
* Concern: Difficult to create a website for so many different users
  + Build capacity within existing systems
* Concern: Oregon isn’t a top-down state and a “one-system” model may run into conflict with this and create tension
  + Oregon can have clear policies without being top-down
  + Focus on clear policy (political leaders must stand behind these policies)
* Define structure, roles, and common language. Focus less on connectivity, as that is happening already
* Statewide tool for business engagement
* Forms/paperwork and support for how to get started
  + Need to limit repeat paperwork
* Website= interface, repository of data would be behind that
* Register yourself on the site and your role
  + Education is automatically in system with link to local data
* E-signatures?
* An all-electronic approach would allow the state to grow the data and learn about how it is being used
* Connect stakeholders in new ways
* Possibility of students being able to track their work-based learning hours, certificates and badges with the system
* Launch Path has tools for work-based learning curation
  + Suggestion: State holds license for something like Launch Path and organizations buy-in to platform to stretch purchasing power
* Place to facilitate parent to parent communication, so that they may become champions for work-based learning (engage all stakeholders)
* Phase-in project
* Make it easy for students to find opportunities
* Attach career interest surveys
* Highlight best practices and share them
* Rolling cycle for participation (dip-in and step-out in any moment)
* Focus on end user and their needs
* What makes sense that’s happening locally and how can ODE support it?
  + Preserve local autonomy while enhancing coordination
* Add to CIS?
* State deep-dive on helping at local level
* Listserv can assist with informal networking across state (employers)
  + However, a suggestion was given that there is no listserv
* Statewide tool for business engagement
* When it’s just a list everyone is asking for intel for the same thing. There needs to be coordination
  + Put resources and funding towards intermediaries and coordinators statewide
  + Pool resources and funding regionally for coordination
* In order to access grant funds, Oregon needs to show that it’s pooling partner resources
* Community colleges need to be at the table as partners
* Hold annual work-based learning conference in addition to web-based communication

Streamline paperwork/requirements

* Education: Understanding the liability for businesses and schools will lift worry so that the focus will be on the learner
* Eligibility should be based on informed decision making. The state has an obligation to provide alternative opportunities.
* Barriers:
  + Inconsistent paperwork from different sources
  + Lack of knowledge
    - For example, there are multiple definitions of apprenticeship and internship
    - Need clear lines and consistent nomenclature
  + Benefits “cliff”- participating in a paid work-based learning opportunity can cause someone to lose benefits (child care, SNAP, health insurance, etc.)
    - Maintain status quo vs. hedging bets for advancement
    - State helps to address this by providing room waivers and investing in individuals
* Barriers for employers:
  + Liability issues- students carry distinct liability
  + ITAR (government/citizenship requirements)
    - “Have to” be a citizen to engage in product/service (any clauses to open opportunities?)
  + Prepping for federal positions at the postsecondary level- need clarity re: citizenship
  + “Internship” vs. “apprenticeship”- concerns around meaning and what is allowed
    - Definitions set by the state and shared thoroughly
    - Rename “ELO: Experience learning opportunity”
* Barriers for schools
  + Paperwork: logistic issues with paperwork
    - Suggestion: digital platform and one-time gathering of information
      * Parents can sign forms digitally
    - Age issues (less than 18 years)
    - Medical
  + Background checks on all involved/drug tests
    - State should consider how to support volunteer base and provide safety for students (businesses do background checks on youth participants)
* State can assist through:
  + Templates
  + Data housing (adaptable and customizable by region)
  + Providing aid to students without access
  + Providing guidance: Realistic expectations of safety and exposure via work-based learning experiences
  + Continuing with definitions
  + CIS “like” connect points with their experience
  + Ensuring paperwork travels with student through secondary through postsecondary (dashboard to carry experience and forms)
  + Data auto populates via I.D.- longitudinal systems
  + Creating standards, policy and formats
  + Consistency across agencies/ centralize location on BOLI, ODE, OED, state gov., workforce board, CCWD, HECC, DHS, DOC, HCS
  + State/IRS waiver form related to work-based learning earning
    - State common forms with regional tax dues/affects
  + Holding agency head/policy maker summit to support a clear path for agreed upon standards and policies
  + Developing a work-based learning manual for business/industry, schools and educators
    - Developed with regional input
    - Clear language, clear policy, state uniformity
  + Addressing Liability- provide state aid in the “umbrella of support” for the work-based learning students
    - Liability form : ease of use, streamlined, and accessible
  + Promoting value proposition to business/industry: Engage with the education system to provide essential training
  + Facilitating vetting: Establish criteria for people who enter the work-based learning experience
    - Includes P.P.E, first aid, enclosed space, hazard that don’t extend to OSHA 10
      * Business/industry prerequisites needed to have students in the workspace
  + Establishing a framework and communication

Addressing Barriers to Student Participation

* What are the biggest barriers to enabling more students to participate in meaningful work-based learning at your level of education?
* How can the state use the following levers to help address those barriers:
  + Professional development
  + Technical Assistance
  + Funding
  + Policy
* What resources from other organizations can be used to help address barriers?

Discussion:

* School practitioners coordinate work-based learning experiences
  + Barrier: Capacity
  + Barrier: Funding
  + Suggested solutions:
    - Connect theory to practice and practice to theory
    - Regional supports specific to work-based learning and CRLE
* Barrier: Variety of opportunities (relative to interests and personal education plans)
  + Built in opportunities within a grant and business/industry positions
  + Space available
  + Students qualified
* Barrier: Student awareness and opportunity in their area/statewide
* Barrier: Transportation (cost, time, school/social expectations)
  + Student capacity
  + Suggested solutions:
    - Couple/braid opportunities to meet expectations
    - Address issues down to the ‘excused absence’ related to stepping out of class
* Barrier: Paperwork
  + Accessibility
  + Deadlines
  + Codify real life into work-based learning (link to curriculum, credit)
  + Complementary vs. addictive paperwork and expectations (grad, programmatic)
* Field Based Supports
  + Double taxation of classroom educator
* TOSA capacity to support
  + (Stipend, schedule, related to business/industry and school hours, supervision, outreach, certification, ‘validity’ paths that support career exploration/education, business/industry liaisons, WBL management)
* CTE licensure in career guidance?
* Barrier: Pay scale and certifications affect the recruitment of high-quality candidates to place in front of students
* Suggestion solution: Asset mapping and allocation of trained/educated resources (i.e. counselors)

Next Steps

* How do you want to stay involved?
  + Have the opportunity to review and evaluation milestones
* Which pieces of this work are most important to you in the short term? Long term?
* What is the best way to share information moving forward?
* How do we reach more stakeholders?