



## Program Management

Without a doubt, good program management requires the ability to prioritize time, tasks, information, resources, and effort. Teacher-coordinators must keep many efforts on track, and therefore, should be flexible in prioritizing activities as well as managing their time and resources to greatest effect. Successful work-based learning programs are the outcome of quality management practices.

## Managing Facilities, Equipment, Supplies

Quality work-based learning programs need appropriate facilities, proper equipment, and adequate supplies. The main facility required is a room for the related class. Many advantages can be cited for locating this room within an area where occupational skills can also be taught. Whenever possible, coordinate facilities, equipment, and supplies with counselors and other career development programs.

Because occupationally related skills are taught on the job or in courses that are part of the sequential program, the related class needs space only for teaching general-related and technical-related subject matter.

Suggestions for desirable related-classroom facilities and equipment include:

- Offices for teacher-coordinators should be adjacent (or close) to the related classroom. Many work-based learning teachers recommend that at least one office should have a window or glass partition between the office and related classroom. This arrangement provides a private place for emergency student counseling while letting the teacher-coordinator continue to observe and supervise the work of other students in the related class.
- A display case visible in a main school corridor should be available to students in the related class so they can share exhibits or occupational materials relevant to the program.
- The classroom should contain adequate storage cabinets for all related instructional materials, reference textbooks, study guides, instructional aids, resource manuals, and other items.
- The classroom should maintain adequate career development materials, including magazines in racks and a variety of publications related to the occupations represented in the related class.
- Furniture should include moveable tables to provide maximum flexibility when setting up the classroom to facilitate individual, small group, and large group learning activities.
- If the school designates space to house all occupational related programs, work-based learning related classrooms should also be located there.
- Whenever possible, simulated environments should be developed and designed, such as model stores, offices, shops, laboratories, and other simulated workstations, including computer labs.

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- Facilities should be attractive and functional in order to have the maximum positive psychological effect on students.

Second only to the classroom is the need for teacher-coordinators to have adequate office space which allows them to fulfill the many duties associated with the coordinator's job, including administration and counseling that are not common to most other teaching positions. In addition to typical records and reports, coordinators must participate in student selection, supervise on-the-job training, create periodic follow-up studies, and may sponsor student organizations. The office may also be used for conferences with employers, parents, or both, and is frequently used to discuss confidential matters with students and work-based learning program staff.

Offices for teacher-coordinators should adjoin the related classroom, be large enough to meet with several individuals at once, and, at minimum, be equipped with outside telephone service, filing cabinets, desk, and chairs. Other considerations for the many uses of coordinator offices include:

- Adequate space for a conference table and comfortable seating to ensure good communication for three or four people at once;
- Provisions for maintaining privacy of confidential matters with simultaneous visibility of the related classroom;
- Ample filing and/or storage equipment and space for audio-visual equipment and bookshelves for reference materials;
- Appropriate desk space with a computer and a printer.

## Budgeting

The level, type, and location of the work-based learning program will determine facilities and equipment needed, as well as projections for budget items and requirements. The amount of money needed in each of the following suggested budget areas depends upon the size and scope of the work-based learning program:

- Instructional materials, including individualized study guides, textbooks, student manuals, and other student-related study materials.
- Resource materials, including supplementary textbooks, study guides, magazines, newspapers, and guidance materials.
- Extended contracts for teacher-coordinators. Schools operating on nine-month contracts should offer teacher-coordinators extended days to assure that students are placed at training stations near the beginning of the school year. In schools starting new work-based learning programs, teacher-coordinators should be hired several months in advance of the program launch date.
- Telephone and service, including outside line and long-distance access.
- Other equipment for office support and occupational support. Inventories of existing equipment with required maintenance schedules should be maintained. Needed equipment should also be identified and a prioritized acquisition list should



be maintained. If equipment was purchased with Perkins funds, an inventory list like the example provided below can be used.

<https://www.educateiowa.gov/documents/technical-assistance-cte/2013/10/perkins-funded-equipment-inventory-template>

- Travel expenses for coordination activities. Most schools use one of the following three methods for allocating the cost of travel:
  - Reimbursement at state rates if the use of the teacher-coordinator’s private vehicle is required;
  - A specific amount is allocated to cover costs of teacher-coordinator travel;
  - The school provides a vehicle for teacher-coordinator use.
- Supplies, including stationery, postage, envelopes, paper, and/or photocopy facilities, computer supplies, and the printing of forms and brochures.
- Expenses associated with professional development activities, student activities, advisory council meetings, and other appropriate meetings.

## Information Management

Through technological support, teacher-coordinators must maintain records of student competency and other accurate information in order to make timely decisions. The size of the work-based learning program and the existing computer system at the school will influence the type of management information system (MIS) developed and used by the teacher-coordinator.

## Public Relations (PR)

Establishing and maintaining positive relationships with students, parents, businesses, school personnel, and community members is an important teacher-coordinator function. Teacher-coordinators must influence people to understand and support work-based learning programs by communicating the program value relative to the process of career development.

Public relations and marketing are terms often used interchangeably, but they are actually different processes and should be viewed as distinct approaches to communicating the message of work-based learning.

Marketing is the most straightforward approach. It refers to an information-sharing process that is *paid*, usually through *advertisements* in a variety of both print and electronic media. Creating, printing, and mailing work-based learning program brochures is a marketing activity, as is placing an advertisement in a local newspaper or industry magazine to announce an event of the work-based learning program.

Public relations is the less tangible but perhaps more important perception in the minds of appropriately targeted groups that the work-based learning program is valuable, of high quality, and worthy of their support. Public relations activities are usually *unpaid*, even if they still (and should) result in coverage by local print and electronic media. Public relations efforts result in coverage within the *news* portion of the media, which is usually done at no cost to the subjects, while marketing activity results in placement of information within *advertising* space, which is generally paid for by whomever wants to share a message.

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Work-based learning programs that make the most of their public relations efforts can achieve great success at minimal cost.

Even without a formally developed PR effort, many teacher-coordinators have very positive relations with the various publics they serve by:

- Ensuring student growth and development are the focal point of work-based learning;
- Building the program as an integral part of the school curriculum;
- Informing administrators of work-based learning plans and activities;
- Informing and involving parents, counselors, and teachers in work-based learning;
- Positively representing the school when dealing with parents, businesses, and the community;
- Becoming active citizens of the community;
- Avoiding conflicts that may detract from professionalism;
- Working in cooperation with employers and other teacher-coordinators to improve the image and outcomes of work-based learning.

## *Target Groups*

Public relations activities can be most effective when focused on a collection of targeted groups, such as students, administrators, counselors and advisors, parents, workers at training stations, employers, and community groups. Involvement often leads to commitment, which is a positive benefit to the work-based learning program.

Students who can benefit from work-based learning are frequently unaware that the opportunity is available. Make sure they are first on the list of targeted groups. Many students may know such a program exists but do not understand its purpose or how it relates to their immediate interests and personal development. Publicity directed toward students should appeal to these interests and goals, to ensure all students have the opportunity to learn about the benefits work-based learning can offer.

Students are work-based learning's primary audience. Peer group opinion is a critical factor in the way work-based learning is perceived by students, thus it is important to highlight and publicize students who have been well served by the program. Emphasize opportunities to experience an occupational area and assume an adult role in society, rather than just earning money or escaping the school environment. Successful work-based learning students will become the best source of positive public relations for the program and should be called upon to share their stories with new or potential enrollees.

Teachers should be informed of student progress, learning outcomes, and follow-up results that show how students benefited from their training. Faculty members also enjoy knowing that their contributions had a bearing on students' occupational adjustment and advancement. Teacher-coordinators can often help teachers of other classes where work-based learning students may be having problems.

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Administrators are interested in student outcomes — how students benefit from work-based learning. Keep them informed of student achievements, placements, employer evaluations, and other activities. Periodically submit statistical and narrative written reports, and invite them to observe students at training stations, in classrooms, and at functions of student organizations. Administrators must be informed of concerns or issues the work-based learning program positively impacts, including improved attendance, dropout reduction, increased employability, and real-world relevance for education. Administrators also need to learn of the challenges faced by the program, including any assistance needed for its continuous improvement.

Counselors and advisors want to know about student development. Actively involving them in the operation of the work-based learning program will reduce their concern that enrolling a student in the program may restrict opportunities for students to enroll in other courses. To demonstrate to counselors and advisors the student benefits of work-based learning, invite them along on coordination visits, plan their participation in the related-class instruction, involve them in the student admission process, and use their professional expertise to help students determine career interests and aptitudes and to prescribe student learning activities.

Parents, especially in work-based learning programs serving secondary students, are extremely important to student progress and program success. They should be involved with their student's choice of courses and with their long-term educational plan. Parents may often be uninformed about the opportunities work-based learning provides, or they may be misinformed about its purposes and values.

A common misconception is that students enrolled in work-based learning cannot meet college entrance requirements. Parents should be informed of the potential outcomes, such as improved grade point averages and attendance, and the positive impact these outcomes can have on college admission processes. Parents can be encouraged to endorse the program by showing them that it is educationally sound, socially acceptable, and extends past “having a job” because it offers specific occupational preparation and experience.

Co-Workers at Training Stations are employees within the community who will be on the job next to work-based learning students. Their high level of contact with the students makes it essential that they understand and support the training effort. In particular, organized labor groups may be concerned about how work-based learning trainees affect the availability of work for their members. Teacher-coordinators can establish good relationships with labor organizations and their members who will be co-workers of student-trainees by enlisting their cooperation early in the program planning stages, by giving recognition for their contributions to work-based learning, and by demonstrating how work-based learning benefits employees in their occupational fields.

Employers in the community must be well informed about the work-based learning program and must understand their responsibilities within it. Employers must do more than mean well and be willing to hire students; they must understand the training and educational aspects of the

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program and help to achieve training goals. Schools can become a direct, reliable employment and referral source for both work-based learning students and those not able to enroll in the program. Therefore, information directed toward employers should emphasize the benefits of working with the school to develop good employees.

Personal contact made by the teacher-coordinator is the most effective means of communicating with employers. In addition, employers may also be reached through printed materials, service organization and trade association meetings, paid advertising and newspaper publicity, as well as public relations events associated with the work-based learning program, including appreciation/recognition events, career fairs, and guest speaker requests. Invitations to participate in planning, advisory councils, evaluation, and public relations activities helps keep employers informed and involved in work-based learning.

Community Groups, including numerous agencies, organizations, and civic clubs, are concerned with community development and the educational opportunities available in Iowa schools. They are often influential in establishing new curricula or in getting total community support for programs. Be sure to keep these groups informed about the work-based learning program and ask them to play a part in helping develop a program suited to the needs of individuals in the community.

Many professional organizations, welfare agencies, service organizations, and other community groups welcome opportunities to have the teacher-coordinator and work-based learning students speak about programs at their meetings. By becoming active participants in their communities, including appropriate involvement in organizations and community improvement projects, teacher-coordinators can develop and maintain harmonious relationships that also benefit the work-based learning program.

## *Public Relations Activities*

Possible activities are many and may include:

- Personal contact;
- News releases and newspaper articles;
- Social Media (LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, blogs, etc.)
- Presentations by students and/or teacher-coordinators;
- Radio/TV presentations and public service announcements;
- Community exhibits;
- Career days or career fairs;
- Pamphlets, brochures, flyers, and newsletters;
- Tours and open houses;
- Special school assemblies;
- School exhibits;
- Breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, and banquets;
- Bulletin boards and display case presentations.

Determining what should be done and when to do it are the most important decisions for teacher-coordinators to make. Creating a calendar of public relations events will help ensure that

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useful activities are completed in a timely manner. Rather than try to do everything when resources are limited, success will be more likely if teacher-coordinators choose a few activities or events they know can be completed and done well. The suggested calendar below can be customized for each work-based learning program.

Month	Public Relations Activities or Events
<i>July-August</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Complete and update surveys</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Contact local media</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare news release for local papers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare and distribute informational brochures</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Plan and schedule presentations for faculty orientation</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Promote work-based learning while securing training stations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Plan presentations to service clubs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare bulletin board or display case for opening of school</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Conduct orientation meeting with new students and parents</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Set up advisory council and plan schedule of meetings</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Plan and publicize student organizations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attend state-sponsored coordinators' conference</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Schedule community resource people for related class</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Update teacher-coordinator social media</li> </ul>
<i>September</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Meet with school and/or local newspaper editor to create a series of articles on students and businesses that serve as training sponsors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Plan and publicize activities of student organizations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Release news article on advisory council's work</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Give administrators a list of students, positions, and employers</li> </ul>
<i>October</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Schedule administrators and counselors for related class and training station visits</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Schedule students to present their jobs via social media, bulletin board or display case</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Schedule students to speak to selected service clubs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Release news articles regarding training placement of students; continue to feature one or more students each week</li> </ul>

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<i>November</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Schedule work-based learning teacher-coordinators to accompany training station visits and assist with using the training plan</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Arrange to speak or have a student speak at a service club meeting</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Encourage work-based learning students to sponsor a service project</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare a news release for a sales project or service activity</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reserve space for work-based learning activities in school yearbook</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Emphasize American Education Week activities</li> </ul>
<i>December</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Plan student organization party</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Plan and conduct a career related school assembly program</li> </ul>
<i>January</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Distribute program brochures to prospective students</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop a short mid-year report on program progress for advisory council members, faculty, and administration</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review work-based learning opportunities with counselors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare for student registration with counselors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Start preparation for National Career &amp; Technical Education Week</li> </ul>
<i>February</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop a news release regarding student organization activities for the school or local newspaper</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop a news release regarding related state competitive events</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide information to teachers to distribute to students who may want to enroll in a work-based learning program</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Conduct National Career &amp; Technical Education Week activities: displays, articles, presentations, speakers, contests, etc.</li> </ul>
<i>March</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop and mail a newsletter to all program graduates</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Share student successes with counseling staff</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Interview student applicants for next year's class</li> </ul>
<i>April</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Finalize plans for Employer Appreciation/Recognition event</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Invite advisory council members and school board members to visit training stations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Interview student applicants for next year's class</li> </ul>
<i>May</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop and send a parent newsletter</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make a point to personally thank each employer and training station sponsor for their efforts during the year</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop a news release regarding advisory council membership and contribution</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Contact prospective employers</li> </ul>
<i>June</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Schedule counselor, advisor, administrator, and teacher appreciation luncheon</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate results of public relations efforts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attend summer school or workshops for professional development</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Plan next year's public relations schedule</li> </ul>



## Employer-Employee Appreciation/Recognition Activities

Most work-based learning programs plan some type of employer-employee appreciation activity near the end of the school year to recognize the contributions of these important program partners. Beyond the common courtesy extended through this activity, benefits of planning and holding an annual appreciation event include:

- Employers receive formal – and public – recognition for time and effort given.
- Students develop leadership skills in planning and conducting the event.
- Students develop proper social skills for formal business situations.
- Greater prestige is created for work-based learning.
- Positive public relations for work-based learning can be generated.
- Increased cooperation between the school and community is recognized.

In the past, the dinner banquet has been the most popular form of employer appreciation event. Recently other activities involving food, awards, and recognition – luncheons, breakfasts, and less formal dinners – have also been successful at showing appreciation for the work-based learning partners in your community.

When planning the activity, teacher-coordinators should work with students and student organizations to accomplish the following:

- Establish a student planning committee early in the year;
- Decide the type of recognition activity;
- Select an event date for April or May;
- Establish a theme;
- Collect prices and menus from several acceptable sites or caterers, if food is involved;
- Decide methods of fundraising and collecting funds to support the event;
- Establish timelines for securing funds to support the activity and for designing and printing invitations, response requests, award certificates or plaques;
- Plan the event program;
- Determine recipients of awards;
- Assign responsibility for each part of the event program;
- Decide who to invite to the event and create an attendance list;
- Periodically check the progress of the plan.

Schools with several work-based learning programs frequently plan one appreciation event for all classes. The planning phase for such a multi-program event may be more complex and extend the timeline for completion.

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## Legal Issues, Labor Laws, Risk Management, Insurance

Teacher-coordinators of work-based learning programs must constantly be aware of all legal aspects of employment that apply to student-trainees. Most important are those items relating to workers under the age of eighteen. Teacher-coordinators have responsibilities, both moral and professional, to know the provisions of the law that apply to the employment of young people.

As training station sponsors, employers are legally responsible for following the provisions of laws governing employment. Employers may look to teacher-coordinators for legal and employment information, especially if they have not regularly employed students. If employers refuse to comply with applicable laws, they should be considered inappropriate as training stations and existing agreements with such employers, if any, should be terminated.

Bias on grounds of race, creed, color, marital status, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, gender identity, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or age is prohibited in work-based learning programs. Teacher-coordinators must ensure that all students have the same opportunities to participate. Discrimination is prohibited in all aspects of work-based learning programs, including admission, recruitment, treatment of students, academic requirements, financial and employment practices, health, welfare, and social services.

Written assurances of nondiscrimination must be obtained from training sponsors. The following statement serves as an example of what should be included in training agreements:

### **SAMPLE NOTIFICATION OF NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT:**

*It is the policy of all parties not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or age in its programs, activities, or employment practices as required by the Iowa Code sections 216.9 and 256.10(2), Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d and 2000e), the Equal Pay Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 206, et seq.), Title IX (Educational Amendments, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 – 1688), Section 504 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq.).*

More specific information and references about risk management (safety and health), legal issues, and employment laws can be found in *Section B: Risk Management* and in *Section C: Labor Laws and Legal Issues*. Contact the state and federal agencies identified in *Section D: Resources* for specific questions regarding employment law, risk management, and insurance.

## Work-Based Learning (WBL) Advisory Council

Successful work-based learning programs require the knowledge and advice of people in business and industry. Creating and using an [advisory council](#) can be a very productive and relevant method of involving the community in the educational process.

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Potential members of the council should come from fields outside education and be chosen for their specialized knowledge and/or general standing in the community. Suggestions for advisory council membership may come from the school board, school administration, Chamber of Commerce, professional organizations, civic clubs, labor organizations, school faculty, businesses, industries, former or current students, the Iowa Department of Education, employment agencies, the Iowa Division of Labor Services or the US Department of Labor, and institutions of higher education. Key qualifications include an interest in education, the school, and the work-based learning program; occupational experience and specialties; enthusiasm; character; and available time. Balanced representation for the final council membership is also important.

Among other services, advisory councils may be called upon to assist teacher-coordinators with public relations, classroom instruction, on-the-job training, and program evaluation. The council should:

- Provide a link between the school and community, including identification of training stations and placement opportunities;
- Create a close relationship between local businesses and the work-based learning program;
- Provide an opportunity for interested employers to help organize and impact the educational needs of the community, including suggestions for program standards, components, changes, and evaluation;
- Serve as a sounding board for policies, procedures, innovations, ideas, and other elements of the work-based learning program;
- Help publicize and increase community support for the work-based learning program;
- Assist with teacher-in-the-workplace experiences that contribute to professional growth of faculty in occupational areas and new technologies.

Structure and procedures for advisory councils can be determined by the local group and facilitated by the program teacher-coordinator.

## **Iowa Code 258.9 Local advisory council.**

*The board of directors of a school district that maintains a school, department, or class receiving federal or state funds under Chapter 258 Vocational Education shall, as a condition of approval by the state board, appoint a local advisory council for vocational education composed of public members with emphasis on persons representing business, agriculture, industry and labor. The local advisory council shall give advice and assistance to the board of directors in the establishment and maintenance of schools, departments, and classes that receive federal or state funds under Chapter 258 Vocational Education. Local advisory councils may be organized according to program area, school, community, or region. The state board shall adopt rules requiring that the memberships of local advisory councils fairly represent each sex and minorities residing in the school district. Members of an advisory council shall serve without compensation.*

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The following web site provides guidance regarding the proper use of the advisory committee for career and technical education programs:

<https://www.educateiowa.gov/documents/technical-assistance-cte/2013/10/advisory-groups-manual-113009>.

## Student Organizations

Student organizations play an important role in preparing students for occupational success. Their broad goals involve social, educational, occupational and character development; leadership training; and the development of a sense of personal responsibility and civic consciousness in students. Each student organization also has specific goals and objectives that are unique to the discipline it serves. With good planning and strong support, student organizations can stimulate student learning inside and outside the classroom. Students from the work-based learning program may also participate in other existing clubs and student organizations; teacher-coordinators are encouraged to connect those experiences to the work-based learning program.

Student organizations relevant to work-based learning include:

- *BPA (Business Professionals of America)* – secondary and postsecondary students in business - Iowa <http://iowabpa.net/>; national [www.bpa.org](http://www.bpa.org)
- *DECA* – secondary students in marketing - Iowa <http://iadeca.org/>; national [www.deca.org](http://www.deca.org)
- *Delta Epsilon Chi* – postsecondary students in marketing - national [www.deca.org](http://www.deca.org)
- *FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America)* – secondary students in business - Iowa <http://iowafbla.org/>; national <http://fbla-pbl.org>
- *FFA (Future Farmers of America)* – secondary students in agriculture - Iowa [www.iowaffa.com](http://www.iowaffa.com); national [www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org)
- *FCCLA (Family Careers and Community Leaders of America)* – secondary students in family and consumer science - Iowa <http://www.iafclcla.org/>; national <http://fcclainc.org>
- *HOSA-Future Health Professionals* – secondary and postsecondary students in health - Iowa [www.iowahosa.com](http://www.iowahosa.com); national [www.hosa.org](http://www.hosa.org)
- *Phi Beta Lambda* – postsecondary students in business - Iowa <http://www.iowapbl.org/>; national <http://fbla-pbl.org>
- *PSA (Postsecondary Students in Agriculture)* - Iowa <http://www.iowapas.org/>; national [www.nationalpas.org](http://www.nationalpas.org)
- *TSA (Technology Student Association)* – secondary students in industrial technology - Iowa <http://iatsa.comuv.com/>; national [www.tsaweb.org](http://www.tsaweb.org)
- *Skills USA*- secondary and postsecondary students in trade and industrial education - Iowa <http://skillsusaiowa.org/>; national <http://skillsusa.org>



Student organizations can be utilized to enhance work-based learning program goals through:

- Development of personal, social, and leadership skills;
- Significant opportunities for interaction with other students and professionals in the work world;
- Opportunities for studying career choices and testing the levels of their occupational skills;
- Co-curricular activities which provide opportunities to plan and implement a program of work.

If local chapters of the national organizations exist or are created, work-based learning teacher-coordinators may serve as the chapter sponsor or advisor. This advisory role is an important part of the total teacher-coordinator effort and involves directing, leading, and supervising all chapter activities. Successful advisors must be able to:

- Develop the abilities of chapter members to appropriately conduct chapter meetings and activities;
- See that meaningful publicity brings positive attention to chapter activities;
- Assist students in evaluating chapter activities;
- Give appropriate emphasis to student participation in local, state, and national organization activities and events; and
- Become familiar with local school guidelines and policies governing student organizations, as well as the chartered requirements, goals, and objectives of each organization.

As local chapter advisors, teacher-coordinators perform five functions: administrator, program-of-work facilitator, evaluator of activities, facilitator of conferences and competitive events, and coordinator of public relations. Each organization maintains its own guidelines for these functions, thus advisors should become familiar with those required by the specific groups with school chapters.

### *Teacher-Coordinator as Chapter Administrator*

Most chapters must complete and submit reports to local school officials, state advisors, and national advisors on membership status, chapter activities, candidates for office, and participants in competitive events, among others. Advisors should ensure that the chapter's secretary takes responsibility for maintaining complete files, including budgets, calendars, publications, annual reports, evaluations, charters, correspondence, and other relevant materials.

### *Teacher-Coordinator as Program-of-Work Facilitator*

In this function, advisors guide and assist students in developing the written outline of activities a local student organization plans to accomplish during the year. Activities should involve the members in a variety of experiences that meet their needs and the needs of the organization, school, and community. Advisors help obtain administrative approval for the program of work and provide adult supervision for all educational, social, and civil activities.



Planning a Program of Work ensures that student organization activities complement the educational goals of both the work-based learning program and the organization itself. Ask the following questions:

- What is the activity and its objective(s), or why is the activity needed?
- What is the time frame required?
- Who is responsible for each part of the activity?
- What resources, funds, materials, supplies, and equipment are needed?
- Who will evaluate the activity?

### *Teacher-Coordinator as Evaluator of Activities*

Evaluation is the key to improvement in any student organization. Advisors should prepare an annual report on the effectiveness and outcomes of each activity outlined in the chapter's program of work, and the report should be shared with the advisory council and local school administration, among interested others. Reviewing the previous year's evaluation will help assure that new programs are meeting the needs of participants.

Items to evaluate include chapter goals, procedures, activities, outcomes, and the personal goals of members and participants.

### *Teacher-Coordinator as Facilitator of Conferences and Competitive Events*

Many student organizations offer competency-based competitive events, designed to test knowledge, skills, and attitudes gained while in the work-based learning program and which correlate to student career objectives. Advisors plan, manage, motivate, guide, and counsel students who participate in local, state, and national conferences, competitive events, and related learning activities.

### *Teacher-Coordinator as Coordinator of Public Relations*

Advisors assist chapter members in publicizing their organization and its activities to gain community support, recognize member achievements, facilitate cooperation of parents and others, and generate interest from prospective members. By sharing the benefits gained from participation in student organizations, advisors help ensure the chapter's existence and the continued involvement of students, employers, community members, faculty, administrators, and parents.

## **Parent Involvement**

With their concern about the educational programs and progress of their children, parental involvement in the work-based learning program can serve many purposes. Among other roles, parents can be enlisted as classroom and worksite resources, which will help translate them into enthusiastic supporters of, and positive communicators about, the work-based learning programs. Parents can also provide an increased amount and quality of information about their students. As parents become assured that their students are succeeding, they may also be willing to provide potential training stations and placement opportunities. In addition, parents can participate in the advisory council and be called upon for feedback and program evaluation.

# Work-Based Learning



Parents may be involved at all levels of the work-based learning program. Increased communication with parents will help address concerns and expectations such as:

- Is this program the best choice for my child?
- Can my child be successful in this program?
- Will my child have enough time to work, be successful in school, and participate in other activities?
- Will this program prevent my child from taking necessary classes, participating in extracurricular activities, or becoming involved in other important school events?
- Is my child ready to make a career choice?

Parents also want to be satisfied that their children are receiving a quality education and that their children are being treated fairly, with all the advantages and opportunities as students in other parts of the school program. While not all parents will be able to participate directly in the work-based learning program, keeping them informed will increase their support for the program and its benefit to their students. Parents or parent groups may become involved in any of the following ways:

- Advising on program enrollment procedures and application forms;
- Discussing perceptions at a program open house;
- Completing a questionnaire or interview as part of the assessment process;
- Holding informal conversations during the school year;
- Serving as guest speakers or other resources for career units;
- Helping to schedule tours of local employer locations;
- Taking a positive role at home in career guidance;
- Referring potential training stations;
- Discussing interview procedures and/or role-playing student job interviews;
- Helping their child prepare for job interviews;
- Reviewing and recommending changes in program components;
- Seeking their assistance if their child is not meeting program expectations;
- Involving them in the program evaluation process;
- Establishing a parent advisory committee;
- Serving as chaperones and supervisors of students' organizations and activities.