



THE POWER OF WBL

CONNECTING TODAY'S LEARNING TO TOMORROW'S SUCCESS



WBL LEADS TO HIGHER GRADUATION RATES



76%

Students who participated in WBL graduated high school.

— U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



86%

Students with one or more WBL experiences graduated.

— U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation



87%

Students who participated in two or more WBL experiences graduated.

— U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation



Pathway graduates who secure full-time employment in a career aligned with their program tend to earn more than those who work in an unrelated field, with outcomes varying by program.

1

CTE PATHWAYS EXPAND STUDENT OPPORTUNITY



53%

of districts offered college-focused CTE pathways connected to careers requiring postsecondary education.



29%

of districts offered career-focused CTE pathways designed for direct workforce entry after high school.



CTE is no longer "college OR career." Modern CTE supports both postsecondary education and workforce readiness.

3

STRONG CAREER NAVIGATION HELPS STUDENTS

4

WBL PARTICIPATION RATES VARY BY INSTITUTION



CTE CENTER HIGH SCHOOLS

94%

Law and public safety students have the highest WBL participation rate.



LEA HIGH SCHOOLS

46%

Education and health science students have the highest WBL participant rates.

2

EARLY EXPOSURE MATTERS

Students with career goals are more likely to:



EXPLORE

Discover possibilities early.



ENGAGE

Connect learning to interests.



EXPERIENCE

Gain real-world skills through WBL.



LAUNCH

Build confidence for future success.

MIDDLE SCHOOL → HIGH SCHOOL → POSTSECONDARY → CAREER

Early career exploration leads to informed choices, greater persistence, and lifelong success.



Health science students are more likely to enroll in postsecondary education than architecture and construction students.



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WBL PROVIDES:

DIRECTION. RELEVANCE. OPPORTUNITY.

High-quality work-based learning helps students connect education to purpose, improve engagement, and prepare for lifelong success.



Source: Galvan, J. (2026, May 13). Research Roundup: College and Career Pathways, Career Navigation. CTE Policy Watch: A Blog for CTE Advocates. <https://www.acteonline.org/cte-policy-watch/?cat=data-and-research>

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