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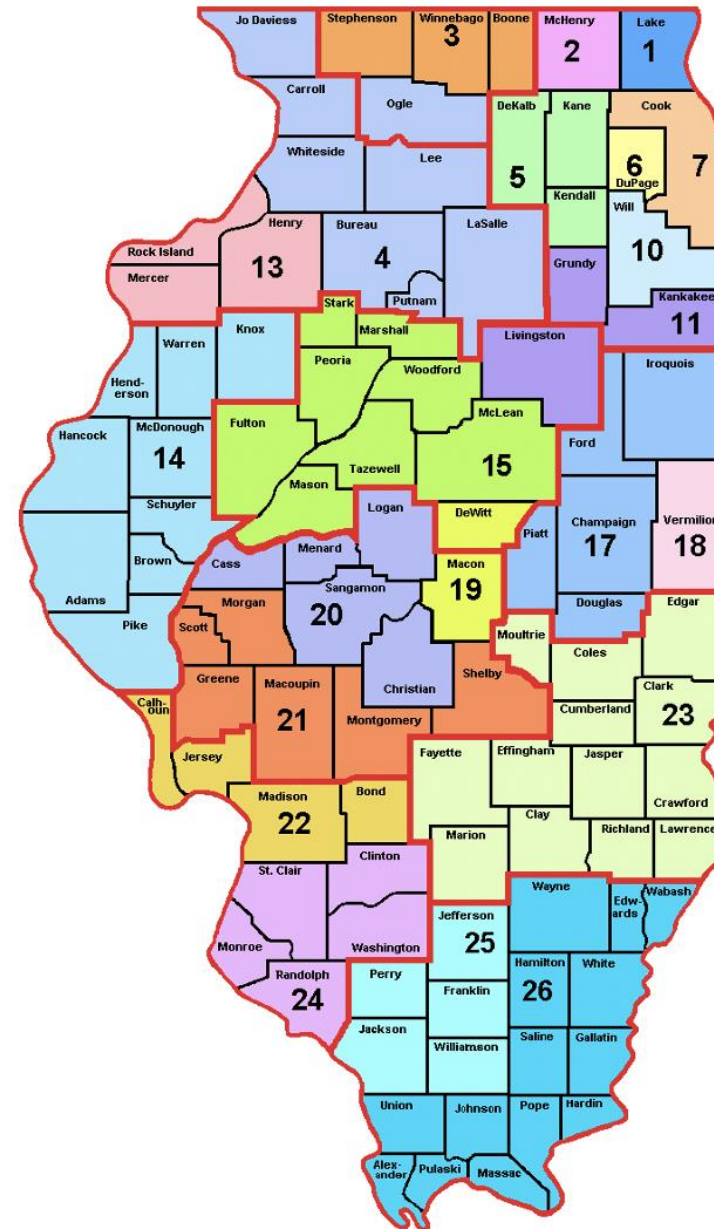


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Work-Based Learning in Illinois: Insights & Action

August 20, 2025
1:00-2:00 PM

Where is
Your Local
Area?



Which partner do you
best represent?





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Chair, Work-Based Learning & Apprenticeship Committee

VP of Government and Public Affairs at Aon

Antonio Gómez

Lead Staff, Work-Based Learning & Apprenticeship Committee

Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support

Work-Based Learning Workgroup Members:

- Daniel Serota (Workgroup Chair) - Aon
- Larry Fitzpatrick – Employment & Employer Services
- Jason Klein, Ph.D. – College of Education and Center for P-20 Engagement, Northern Illinois University
- Stephen Lefaver - North Central Illinois Finishing Trades Institute
- Laz Lopez, Ed.D. - High School District 214
- Laura Love - Strada Education
- Brent Parton - CareerWise
- Julio Rodriguez – Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity
- Erica Thieman, Ph.D. – Illinois State Board of Education
- Whitney Thompson – Illinois Community College Board
- Debbie Wasden - Burning Glass Institute
- Taylor White - New America

Support:

- Antonio Gomez (Workgroup Staff Lead) – Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support
- Jennifer Foil, Ph.D. – Workforce Policy Lab, Northern Illinois University
- Jordan Johnson – Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support
- Abbi Barton – Illinois State Board of Education
- Heather Penczak – Education Systems Center, Northern Illinois University
- Lindsey Phillips – New America
- Elizabeth Yotter – Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support

✓ Background

✓ Key Findings

- State of Illinois WBL Data
- Literature Review
- Data Gaps

✓ Recommendations

✓ Q&A

Agenda



Background

What is the purpose of the report?



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Work-Based Learning &
Apprenticeship Committee

- ✓ To gather a workgroup of national and state experts to lend their expertise and data
- ✓ To conduct a national and state literature review
- ✓ To draft recommendations
- ✓ To drive the expansion of WBL programming in Illinois

1. State of Illinois WBL Data

Key Findings

The Apprenticeship Illinois Framework

Establishes a **dual strategy**:

✓ **Apprenticeship Specialists**

- focus on the demand side; employer/system-centered
- can assist with any type of WBL programming

✓ **Apprenticeship Intermediaries**

- focus on the supply side; participant-centered

Dept. of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

DCEO (Title I) data reflects (PY17-23):

- ✓ Approx 2,500 WBL enrollments each year
- ✓ **Apprenticeships** on the rise since PY20
- ✓ **Pre-apprenticeships** relatively stagnant
- ✓ **OJTs** relatively steady at around 500 since PY19

Illinois WIOA Title I Work-Based Learning Enrollment History PY17-Present



Program Year (PY)	Apprentice-ship	Internship	Job Shadowing	Paid Work Experience	Pre-Apprenticeship Training	Private Sector OJT	Public Sector OJT	Unpaid Work Experience	Total	Change	% Change
PY17	105	247	63	2,024	48	602	20	60	3,169	N/A	N/A
PY18	161	225	70	2,002	271	777	24	87	3,617	448	14.1%
PY19	124	160	58	1,696	158	519	14	115	2,844	(773)	-21.4%
PY20	99	90	40	1,468	51	422	6	59	2,235	(609)	-21.4%
PY21	112	6	90	1,609	33	529	17	71	2,467	232	10.4%
PY22	150	1	106	1,435	33	615	9	99	2,448	(19)	-0.8%
PY23	175	1,328	88	119	39	551	26	104	2,430	(18)	-0.7%
<i>*PY24 thru May</i>	<i>222</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>119</i>	<i>1,253</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>535</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>2,276</i>	<i>(154)</i>	<i>-6.3%</i>
Total Since PY17	1,148	2,057	634	11,606	657	4,550	142	692	21,468	N/A	N/A
Avg Annual Thru PY23	132	294	74	1,479	90	574	17	85	2,744	N/A	N/A

Illinois Community College Board

100%
Response Rate

- ✓ **80%** offer apprenticeship programming (in 2019 approx. 50% offered)
- ✓ **57%** offer pre-apprenticeship
- ✓ **241** unique apprenticeship programs; **194** are registered with USDOL

IDHS – Division of Rehabilitation Services

STEP Program:

- ✓ Collaborates with schools to provide career readiness services for students with disabilities

Pre-ETS:

- ✓ Students receive guidance in job exploration, workplace readiness, postsecondary planning, and self-advocacy

STEP:
Secondary
Transitional
Experience Program

Pre-ETS:
Pre-Employment
Transition Services

IL State Board of Education

School Year	CTE Concentrator Student Participation in WBL
2024	6,726
2023	5,485
2022	2,307

In 2018, ISBE and ICCB developed [State Plan for the Implementation of Perkins V](#)

Work-Based Learning Grant
\$1.8 million to regional CTE directors

Registered Apprenticeships in Illinois

Category	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Active Apprentices	14,160	14,920	16,356	17,711	17,502	17,543	19,388	20,668	21,934
New Apprentices	5,167	5,132	6,226	6,477	4,688	6,301	8,264	8,692	9,094
Construction Trades	3,819	3,783	4,594	4,794	3,417	4,331	5,565	6,114	5,823
% of Construction Trades	74%	74%	74%	74%	73%	69%	67%	70%	64%
All Other	1,348	1,349	1,632	1,683	1,271	1,970	2,699	2,578	3,271
% of Other	26%	26%	26%	26%	27%	31%	33%	30%	36%

✓ **Steady growth** in active apprenticeships from 2016-2024 (14,160 to 21,934)

✓ **Diversification beyond the trades** on the rise

2. Literature Review

Key Findings

State and National Infrastructure

Lack of finalized **state longitudinal data**:



- ✓ System exit and re-entry causes
- ✓ Customer movement across workforce services
- ✓ Long-term customer success rates
- ✓ Customer placement aligned with course of study
- ✓ Need more trained personnel to input data

WBL Continuum

Illinois Career Pathways Dictionary

- ✓ K-12 focused
- ✓ Does not capture full range of WBL opportunities
- ✓ Signals end point as apprenticeship

Work-Based Learning Continuum



Host Engagement Continuum

Managing
Organization
Role

Host / Employer
Role

Participant Barriers



Significant barriers include:

- ✓ Transportation
- ✓ Child/eldercare
- ✓ Course flexibility/load
- ✓ Need for expanded wraparound services
- ✓ For high schoolers, school counselors **don't have time** to provide one-on-one career counseling

Talent Need

✓ Employers reported:

- 2/3 internships currently enrolled in 4-year degree
- 1/3 currently enrolled in 2-year degrees or are college graduates

✓ Success = Employers thinking differently



Employer Incentives



- ✓ Most attractive form of operational support is **financial support**
 - Financial support
 - Coverage of program costs, etc.
 - *Tax incentives have mixed results*
- ✓ Many states, including Illinois, are using **procurement rules** to grow apprenticeships in construction

3. Data Gaps

Key Findings

Data Gaps



- ✓ Lack of longitudinal data tracking
- ✓ Lack of data systematically tracking participation or investment in earn-and-learn opportunities
- ✓ Key players lack access to data
- ✓ Lack of data regarding employer cost-benefit ratio from WBL programming
 - Strada's State Opportunity Index (SOI)

Recommendations

Strengthen Data Systems for WBL

- ✓ Finish building the statewide longitudinal data system
- ✓ Improve data accuracy and usability
- ✓ Enable secure data sharing

1

Expand and Support Employer Engagement and Participation

- ✓ Offer financial incentives Develop a centralized “WBL Resource Hub”
- ✓ Use Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) funding as a bridge for employers to start apprenticeships
- ✓ Launch statewide awareness campaign

2

Strengthen State Infrastructure for WBL

- ✓ Strengthen state procurement strategies
- ✓ Invest in intermediary organizations to coordinate school-employer partnerships
- ✓ Revise statewide WBL definition
- ✓ Set statewide goals for WBL expansion
- ✓ Align pre-apprenticeships with industry needs

3

Support Youth Apprenticeship Development

- ✓ Implement a state-wide standardized framework
- ✓ Use Specialists to coordinate and expand regionally
- ✓ Align programs with funding
- ✓ Focus guidance counseling on post-secondary planning
- ✓ Develop a directory of youth apprenticeships

4

Address Barriers to Participation

- ✓ Increase investment in wraparound services
 - Transportation
 - Childcare
 - Stipends
- ✓ Expand access to career counseling and case management

5

What are our **next steps**?



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TODAY:

- ✓ Gather feedback
- ✓ Help us spread the word

NEXT:

- ✓ Final version will be graphically designed in the upcoming weeks

Q&A



Resources

- [01](#) Registered Nurse Apprenticeship Program at Clay County Hospital
- [02](#) How States are Driving the Expansion of Apprenticeships: State Apprenticeship Policy Scan
- [03](#) Indiana's New Career Pathway: Preparing More Hoosiers For Success After High School
- [04](#) Collaborative Communities, Thriving Industry: Pikes Peak Retail and Hospitality Sector Partnership
- [05](#) Work-based Learning in Colorado Myth vs. Fact
- [06](#) Working To Learn And Learning To Work: A State-By-State Analysis Of High School Work-Based Learning Policies
- [07](#) Illinois Career Pathways Dictionary
- [08](#) Work-Based Learning Workgroup: Workgroup Meetings January 2025 – June 2025
- [09](#) Constructing a Strong Foundation on which to Build: SkillsUSA Illinois Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning Landscape Analysis
- [010](#) How community colleges can realize the full potential of apprenticeships
- [011](#) Amplifying Impact: Youth Work-Based Learning in Boston
- [012](#) Expanding Work-Based Learning Opportunities for Youth: Insights from the Field: Summary of Responses to the U.S. Department of Education's Request for Information on Work-Based Learning
- [013](#) Alabama Work-Based Learning Handbook
- [014](#) Recommendations for Expansion of Youth Apprenticeships in Illinois
- [015](#) Apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning in Illinois
- [016](#) STATE OF NEW YORK 7387—B
- [017](#) A Literature Review of the Research on College Internships from 2021-2023: Focusing on Equity & Quality During the Pandemic Era
- [018](#) State Strategies to Scale Work-Based Learning: Lessons Learned from an NGA Center Policy Academy
- [019](#) State Opportunity Index: Strengthening the Link Between Education and Opportunity
- [020](#) Building Better Internships: Understanding and Improving the Internship Experience
- [021](#) Apprenticeship: Earn-And-Learn Opportunities Can Benefit Workers and Employers
- [022](#) Work-Based Learning Data Collection Toolkit
- [023](#) Colorado WBL Funding Matrix
- [024](#) Thrive Quad Cities: An Education and Workforce Analysis Final Report
- [025](#) Expanding Internships: Harnessing Employer Insights to Boost Opportunity and Enhance Learning
- [026](#) Delivering Work-Based Learning for Rural, Low-Income Adults: Promising Practices and Indicators of Success

Thank you!

