

Designing and Implementing Quality Work-Based Learning Systems

Revisiting the Collaborative Workshop for States and Districts in Savannah, Georgia

September 24–25, 2018

Introduction

The College and Career Readiness and Success Center (CCRS Center), in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) and the Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC), hosted the [Designing and Implementing Quality Work-Based Learning Systems: A Collaborative Workshop for States and Districts](#) event in Savannah, Georgia. More than 500 participants representing 19 states and more than 350 districts shared ideas and learned from one another about their work-based learning (WBL) efforts (see figures 1 and 2 below). The workshop was a continuation of the convening held in spring 2017 that brought together 11 states (Cohort 1) and included an additional eight new states (Cohort 2) to provide an opportunity for both cohorts to collaborate with their state teams in customized planning and peer learning opportunities. The workshop was part of a broader [WBL Initiative](#) that engages states regularly throughout the year in peer-driven learning communities focused on areas of need identified by state teams.

Figure 1. States Represented at the Workshop

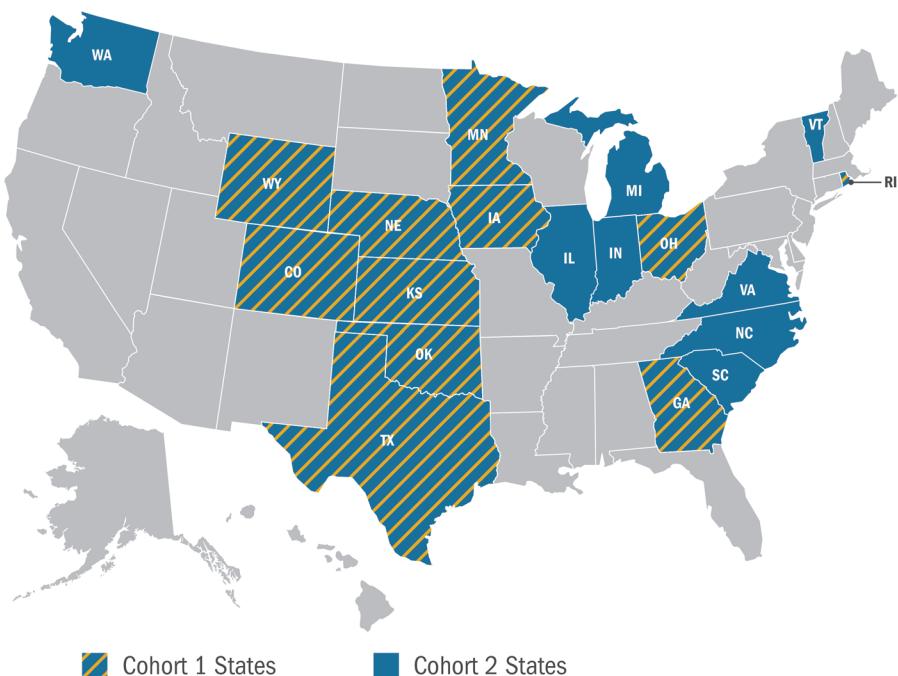
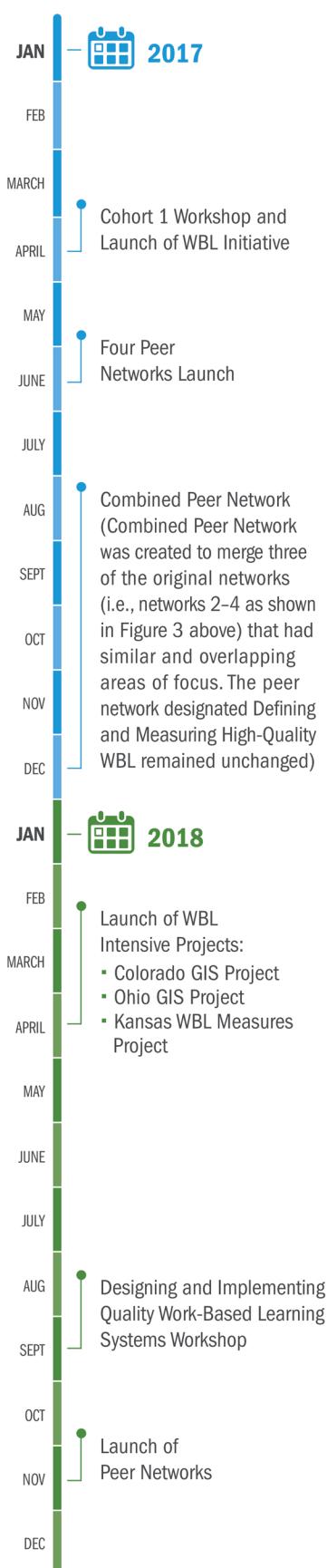


Figure 2. State Team Roles Represented at the 2018 Workshop

	Governor's Office
	School Leader
	State Department of Commerce
	State Department of Labor
	State Department of Workforce Development
	State Education Agency
	Teacher

WBL Initiative Timeline



WBL Workshop Planning

Workshop planning represented a collaborative effort among the CCRS Center, GaDOE, and SECC, but each partner led different activities. The CCRS Center was responsible for content coordination and workshop planning, as well as for outreach to presenters, preparation of state facilitators, and coordination, communication, and prework on behalf of state teams. The GaDOE took responsibility for logistics planning, including coordination with the event space, and led outreach to presenters and coordination and communication with Georgia district participants. The SECC led efforts to edit, design, and print workshop materials.

Background

The September 2018 WBL Workshop built on the work of the WBL Initiative launched in April 2017. During the April 2017 convening, Cohort 1 states created action plans and participated in ongoing support through CCRS-developed technical assistance, tools, and resources and facilitated peer networks focused on priority topics (see figures 3 and 4).

Both workshops were designed to bring together diverse state teams to address a common problem of practice: “How do states increase the number and quality of work-based learning opportunities available to students?” Guided by this question and recognizing that answers would differ depending upon state context, the workshop and subsequent peer networks provided opportunities for collaborative cross-state sharing and consulting and time for designing and implementing action plans.

Figure 3. WBL Initiative Peer Networks

1. Defining and Measuring High-Quality WBL
2. Supporting Rural Communities in WBL
3. The Role of Intermediaries in Supporting WBL
4. Using Geographic Information Systems to Support WBL Decisions

In December 2017, the Combined Peer Network was created to merge three of the original networks (i.e., networks 2–4 as shown in Figure 3 above) that had similar and overlapping areas of focus. The peer network designated Defining and Measuring High-Quality WBL remained unchanged.

As a result of the WBL Initiative, states enhanced their WBL plans by leveraging resources, ideas, and strategies from other states and by developing cross-state relationships to solicit peer support and feedback. To support participating states and districts, the CCRS Center developed a series of tools, guidance documents, and resources that are available to those engaged in similar WBL work.

In preparation for the September 2018 WBL workshop, all 19 state teams developed brief slide presentations highlighting key WBL activities including areas of strength and topics for exploration. Presentations served as key mechanisms that enabled state teams to identify other teams with which to meet and discuss specific WBL efforts.

2018 WBL Content Focus

The WBL workshop focused on topics related to WBL implementation and scale-up and included a series of keynote presentations, panel discussions, state and district presentations, and state team planning opportunities.

State teams were provided ample opportunity to collaborate and engage in common planning time. Each state team had a dedicated CCRS Center facilitator who supported team members in their WBL planning efforts. In addition, participants were provided a WBL facilitation workbook to assist in capturing their WBL successes, needs, key connections, and next steps.

Figure 4. WBL Workshop Agenda Topics

- Alignment of WBL and Perkins V
- Defining and Implementing Employability Skills
- Ensuring High-Quality Apprenticeship Experiences
- Ensuring Students With Disabilities Have Equitable Access to WBL
- Fundamentals of WBL
- Marketing WBL Programs to Different Stakeholders
- Place-Based Strategies for WBL
- Power of WBL in Workforce Solutions
- Professional Learning for WBL Coordinators
- Supporting WBL Through Chambers of Commerce
- Supporting WBL and College and Career Ready Collaborations for American Indian Students and Rural Communities
- WBL and Economic Development
- WBL on the 21st Century Frontier
- WBL Measures for Equity
- WBL for Teachers: Connecting Students to Real-World Applications

CCRS Work-Based Learning Resources:

[Work-Based Learning Definitions:
Themes From States and National
Organizations](#)

[Using Geographic Information
Systems to Support Equitable
Work-Based Learning Planning
and Implementation: Overview
and Resources](#)

[Developing Work-Based Learning
Maps: Data Sets, Indicators, and
Sources](#)

[Essential Questions: Using
Geographic Information System
Maps to Inform Work-Based
Learning Decisions](#)

[What Are Work-Based Learning
Intermediaries?](#)

**More than 85% of participants noted
that they were attending a WBL
Initiative workshop for the first time.**

Results and Feedback From Participants

In the context of a post-event survey of state-level participants, respondents indicated that the WBL workshop:



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| 96% | Provided a valuable opportunity for state teams to interact with and learn from their colleagues within the state and in other states |
| 92% | Helped state teams make meaningful connections between WBL and other aspects of their states' vision for college and career readiness and success |
| 92% | Helped state teams identify ways to strengthen, support, and promote WBL opportunities for secondary students in their states |
| 88% | Helped state teams develop or refine strategies for improving access to high-quality WBL opportunities for all students throughout their states |

The WBL Workshop provided opportunities to learn about the progress states have made in their WBL efforts, specific areas they wanted to explore as part of the WBL Initiative Peer Network, and specific conversations they wanted to have with one another. Areas for exploration included measuring WBL; aligning WBL with other efforts, including ESSA, Perkins V, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA); cross-agency collaboration; supporting educator WBL professional development; piloting and scaling WBL; strategies for engaging business and industry in WBL; developing and implementing WBL evidence-based practices; and marketing and communicating WBL efforts.

State WBL Accomplishments

Below are some of the successes shared by Cohort 1 states.

Colorado successfully launched the second cohort of its apprentice program in July 2018 by enrolling 126 new youth apprentices through CareerWise Colorado. The apprenticeship program is business led and student centered and gives apprentices the opportunity to apply their classroom learning to meaningful work. During their apprenticeship, students are eligible to earn college credit and industry certification while establishing professional networks within their chosen fields. Students gain valuable on-the-job training and see their professional responsibility increase every year of their apprenticeship.

Kansas has developed its *Measuring and Reflecting Students' Learning* document, which provides best practices for creating a student work-based experience portfolio to measure essential employability skills. Kansas also began implementing the WBL Continuum, which provides students with varying exposure to WBL experiences ranging from career awareness to career exploration to career preparation.

Rhode Island has had success with its apprenticeship program, ApprenticeshipRI, a model of job preparation that combines paid on-the-job training with instruction that is designed to increase workers' skill level and wages. Through ApprenticeshipRI and the state's larger WBL initiative, PrepareRI, 50% of Rhode Island public high schools offer high-quality WBL programming, and 50% of public high school seniors will have participated in WBL at some point during their high school experience.

Looking Ahead

To address these identified needs, the WBL Initiative will provide a three-pronged approach for participating states, including two peer networks and a new series of state-led conversations in 2018–19 (see Figure 5 below).

Figure 5. 2018–2019 WBL Initiative Areas of Focus

Approach	Description
State-Led Topical Conversations	State-led conversations will focus on specific topics requested by participants. Presentations will be scheduled based on the availability of the presenter and the date/time that works best for participants. The presentations will provide 20 minutes of content and 40 minutes of discussion.
Peer Network: Measuring High-Quality WBL and Alignment With Perkins V	The Peer Network will conduct regular meetings to discuss and share strategies and issues related to measuring high-quality WBL with an additional focus on aligning with Perkins V.
Peer Network: WBL Implementation and Scale-Up	Peer Network meetings will focus on implementing, scaling, and aligning WBL efforts within the state. CCRS Center staff will host five bimonthly meetings of the full network in 2019, as well as several coaching and support sessions with individual state teams. These sessions will focus on using improvement science methods to facilitate implementation, improvement, and scaling of WBL.



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