

6 FAST FACTS

Overcoming Challenges to Providing Work-Based Learning Experiences (WBLEs)

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WBLEs are an important component of vocational preparation that enable students to develop career interests and gain skills needed for successful employment.

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Teachers report many barriers to creating and implementing WBLEs in the community. Transportation and staffing are among the most frequently cited barriers.

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Strategies for overcoming barriers to transportation include having staff drive school vehicles, requesting parents or the school bus to drop off students at their WBLE site, and sharing transportation with other community agencies.

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When staffing is limited, options include using related services personnel to provide instruction, sharing staff with neighboring school districts or agencies, and choosing WBLE sites that can accommodate multiple students and reduce staffing needs.

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Other barriers teachers report include lack of time to develop WBLEs; limited availability of WBLE sites; inadequate support from administrators, parents, and businesses; and difficulty finding meaningful WBLEs for students with extensive support needs and challenging behaviors.

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Preliminary research suggests teachers use four approaches to respond to the wide array of challenges they encounter. These approaches are (a) creating WBLEs in the school when it is not possible to travel to the community, (b) networking with others to identify potential WBLE sites, (c) pre-teaching needed skills to students and providing resources to families, and (d) advocating for WBLEs with school and community members.

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