CAREER DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE TOOLKIT
FACILITATION GUIDE

Education Systems Center
NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
SHAPING & STRENGTHENING EDUCATION & WORKFORCE SYSTEMS

10 YEARS

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ABOUT EDUCATION SYSTEMS CENTER

Education Systems Center (EdSystems) is a mission-driven policy development and program implementation center based within Northern Illinois University's Division of Outreach, Engagement, and Regional Development. Our mission is to shape and strengthen education and workforce systems to advance racial equity and prepare more young people for productive careers and lives in a global economy. Our primary focus is Illinois, while also working with national and international partners. Through our state university home, we forge longstanding leadership roles with state agencies and intergovernmental bodies. Learn more about EdSystems at www.edsystemsniu.org.

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INTRODUCTION & DISCLAIMER

The purpose of this document is to provide a guided checklist for communities to design and implement a Career Development Experience (CDE) as a part of Illinois' broader work-based learning (WBL) continuum. This document is meant to be used in conjunction with the Career Development Experience Toolkit and Companion Guide in which community models, best practices, and resources for WBL are outlined. Relevant sections of the CDE Toolkit and Companion Guide will be linked throughout this guidebook for your reference and ease, as well as additional resources to support your Managing Organization's WBL design and implementation process.

Implementation of this guide should be done with careful consideration of your individual Participant population. The practices listed are not exhaustive and are meant to be adaptable to best fit the needs of your community. The following steps exist in congruence, but can be done in isolation from one another, or implemented through the course of action that best suits your community members. We hope that these steps empower your Participants to make informed college and career decisions through connection to resources and social capital.

Feel free to follow along with the facilitation guide steps on the CDE Toolkit website.

TERMINOLOGY

TERM	DEFINITION
PARTICIPANT	The individual who will participate in the Career Development Experience (CDE)
MANAGING ORGANIZATION	Lead entity working to organize and coordinate the delivery of CDEs to Participants
HOST	Typically thought of as the employer, the company or organization providing the workplace or authentic working conditions for a Participant to complete their CDE

For the complete definitions of essential CDE terminology, see the CDE Toolkit

BEFORE YOU START

Develop an understanding of the Work-Based Learning Continuum and Career Development Experience as informed by the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness (PWR) Act. To learn more about how this connects to the College and Career Pathway Endorsement framework more broadly you can visit the following resource: An Orientation to College and Career Pathway Endorsements.

STEPS	RESOURCES
Understand the Work-Based Learning (WBL) Continuum	☐ Definition of WBL Continuum Components in the Illinois Career Pathways Dictionary ↗ PDF ☐ Watch Overview of the WBL Continuum ↗ VIDEO
Understand What a CDE Is	☐ CDE Definition: CDE Toolkit: Introduction ↗ WEB ☐ Essential CDE Terminology: CDE Toolkit: Introduction ↗ WEB
Understand Why CDEs Are Beneficial for Participants	☐ Why Should Participants Complete a Career Development Experience?: CDE Toolkit: Introduction ↗ WEB ☐ How WBL Increases Equity for Students ↗ VIDEO ☐ How WBL Can Address Disparities in Your Community: CDE Companion Piece ↗ PDF
Understand Why CDEs Are Beneficial for Hosts	☐ Why Should Hosts Provide a Career Development Experience?: CDE Toolkit: Introduction ↗ WEB ☐ Needs of the Local Labor Market: CDE Toolkit: Getting Started ↗ PDF
Understand Why CDEs Are Beneficial for Managing Organizations	☐ Staff Professional Development: CDE Toolkit: Organizational Structure ↗ WEB

💡 Having a solid understanding of why CDEs are beneficial for Participants, Managing Organizations, and Hosts alike increases the strength of the experience as well as the buy-in for all involved parties.

STEP 1:
GETTING STARTED

☐ Explore the essential components of a successful CDE.

☐ View the summary titled Planning the CDE in the CDE Toolkit to get an idea of what will be expected to plan and implement your CDE.

    ☐ Review the CDE Planning Timeline Template

    ☐ Download the Career Development Experience Template

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

Begin and continue this process with equity and accessibility in mind. Here are some considerations to begin your planning with. Additional equity considerations will be highlighted throughout this document, but it is encouraged to keep the needs of underprivileged members of your community at the forefront. For an extended list of considerations, please refer to the CDE Toolkit Companion Piece, which will be referred to throughout the following steps.

Some of these steps may make more sense with continued movement through this guide. Please feel free to refer back to this as you work through the following parts.

STEP 2:
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

☐ Explore the needs of your community and how WBL can benefit your Participants

 ☐ Is your student population historically underserved? Consider common barriers and solutions for engaging Opportunity Youth as shared in the CDE Companion Piece

☐ Explore different examples of how CDEs can look in the Models for Implementation section of the CDE Toolkit: Getting Started

☐ Explore the capacity of your Managing Organization and how WBL can be implemented:

 ☐ Does your organization already have a structure for designing and implementing work-based learning experiences?

 ☐ Are CDEs a part of your existing structure or can they be added?

☐ Does your organization have the capacity to have a set coordinator for WBL?

 ☐ If not, who will manage the various aspects of CDEs in your organization? Will there be separate coordinators for Participant-facing work and Host-facing work?

 ☐ Learn more in the Staffing Considerations sections of the CDE Toolkit: Organizational Structure and the CDE Companion Piece

STAFFING HIGHLIGHT

Effective coordinating and mentorship by your Managing Organization is one of the most important pieces of this process. Think intentionally about how you, as a Managing Organization, will manage the relationship between the Participant and Host to empower your Participant throughout the CDE experience. Your Managing Organization ideally should have a mentorship structure in place to orient both Participants and Hosts for this experience and check in continually with Participants and Hosts throughout the process. Ask yourself: Will we be able to create a structure that provides Participants with ongoing support? Will we fulfill Participant and Host expectations?

> 💡 CDEs take many shapes and forms, utilize what works best for your community given the capacity of your staff, the current labor market, and Participant needs. Understanding Participant needs begins with understanding community needs. Consider community engagement conversations and the Stakeholder Engagement Checklist on your road to better understanding your community.

> 💡 CDEs can be implemented in isolation from the WBL continuum.

☐ Explore logistical considerations:

    ☐ Consider <u>space usage and scheduling</u>

    ☐ Consider <u>transportation</u>

    ☐ Consider <u>legal considerations</u>

    ☐ Consider additional <u>barriers to minority participation</u> and explore <u>potential solutions</u> early on

    ☐ Consider how you will track Participants' participation and success: How will you know who is accessing and who is not accessing CDEs? How will you intentionally recruit and support those most need of access?

        ☐ Watch the <u>Student-Centered Design and Engagement</u> video

        ☐ Review the Data Collection sections titlted <u>Value of Data</u> and <u>Determining What to Measure</u> in the CDE Toolkit

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

Explore barriers to minority participation and <u>potential solutions</u>.

- Does your CDE structure make it impossible for some students to participate?
- Does your scheduling create limitations for Participants?
- Does your transportation plan limit any students from participating?
- Are you able to offer CDEs during regular school hours for students that have competing priorities (i.e. jobs, family commitments, etc.) outside of school?

STEP 3:
HOST OUTREACH

☐ Connect with potential Hosts in your community

    ☐ Are there already Hosts that have worked with your community?

    ☐ Are there Hosts that already provide WBL experiences earlier in the continuum in your community?

    ☐ Explore examples of Host connections

☐ Form Host partnerships

    ☐ Review guidance on forming Host partnerships

        ☐ Keep expectations of Hosts in mind and CDE Toolkit Guidance on assessing potential Hosts

    ☐ Recruit Hosts

    ☐ Gather Host information before onboarding

        ☐ Utilize the Host Profile template to guide you through data collection

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

Consider Hosts that may be able to provide payment to Participants and/or are able and willing to provide CDE opportunities embedded within school hours. This could prove beneficial for students with existing part-time jobs or other commitments that may hinder them from engaging in a CDE.

See the Equity in Career Development Experiences section in the CDE Companion Piece to learn more.

The best Hosts are those that have a strong and continued involvement in your community and have the capacity and skills to mentor Participants beyond assigning tasks as a part of the CDE. See Host engagement.

To qualify as a CDE a Participant should complete a minimum of 60 hours but this can be broken up into two 30-hour CDEs.

STEP 4:
ONBOARDING

ONBOARDING YOUR HOSTS

☐ Share the following guidance with Hosts:

   ☐ Before the start date:

      ☐ Clarify expectations

      ☐ Formalize Host participation and set up their engagement

      ☐ Develop a plan for Participants

   ☐ Upon the Participants' first day:

      ☐ First day considerations

      ☐ Participant orientation at Host Site

      ☐ Creating a youth-friendly workplace

      ☐ Professional development for Hosts: How are you supporting Hosts to feel prepared to mentor and engage with their Participants?

> The better you know your Participants, the more likely you are able to help them get placed in the right CDE experience for them. Establishing a meaningful relationship with your mentees early will also help you get off on the right foot to support them throughout the CDE process and guide them towards their long-term goals.

ONBOARDING YOUR PARTICIPANTS

☐ Prepare Participants for the CDE

   ☐ Set expectations for the Participant

   ☐ Have Participants' and their guardians complete the commitment and permission forms

   ☐ Conduct a pre-CDE training

   ☐ Complete the first day preparation

      ☐ Does the Participant have all the necessary paperwork for the position? This may include submitting their government-issued ID, setting up a direct deposit, etc.

      ☐ Are there any additional onboarding requirements of the Host that could delay the Participant's start date if not addressed early in the onboarding process?

ONBOARDING YOUR PARTICIPANTS CONT'D

☐ Assess whether Participants are ready for their CDE using the following indicators:

  ☐ Participant Readiness

  ☐ Pre-Program Assessment

☐ Take time to get to know Participants by using the Pre-Assessment Participant Interview Template and empathy interviews tools as a guide

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

Some Participants may not have a government-issued ID or bank account, which may limit them from participating if this is a requirement by the Host. How can your Managing Organization alleviate this barrier of access?

HOST EXPECTATIONS

☐ Do Hosts understand the expectations that the Managing Organization and the Participants have of them?

☐ Do Hosts have reasonable expectations of the Participants?

☐ Do they understand their role as a being beyond a supervisor, but rather a mentor to support and guide Participants to grow as professionals in the industry?

PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS

☐ Do the Participants understand the expectations set upon them?

☐ Do the Participants understand the benefit of the CDE on their professional development?

☐ Are Participants able to tie the work they are doing in their placement to their long-term goals?

  ☐ Are Participants able to tie their work into the statewide recommended essential employability competencies?

  ☐ Do the Participants understand the value they add to the Host organization?

  ☐ Do Participants have the mentorship to help guide them through this process?

    ☐ Consider what participants may be looking for in a mentor and how providing that needed support looks in real-time.

Consider the essential components of a successful CDE. Have you set up a structure that allows for the following Host and Participant expectations to be effectively communicated and successfully fulfilled?

STEP 5:
DURING

☐ [Provide ongoing support](#)

    ☐ Check-in regularly with your Participants; consider asking:

        ☐ Do the Participants understand the expectations the Host has of them?

        ☐ Do the Participants know who they can contact in their Host organization?

        ☐ Do the Participants feel comfortable and valued at their Host organization?

        ☐ Do Participants understand how their work ties into essential employability competencies and their long-term goals?

    ☐ Track Participant participation

        ☐ Utilize the CDE Toolkit's [guidance for Participant assessment](#)

☐ Consider [additional resources and supports for Participants](#)

☐ Prepare for possible issues or conflict and how you will respond by reviewing and bookmarking the CDE Toolkit's [guidance for navigating challenges](#)

> Mentorship will help Participants make connections between what they are doing through their placement and their long-term goals, even if their goals are not directly tied to the work they are during. Participants may be doing a CDE in an industry they realize is not for them, but a mentor may help guide them to recognize that they are still developing essential skills that can be applied to any other industry area.

STEP 6:
WRAPPING UP

☐ Distribute closeout materials for Participants to follow through with their experience. Utilize the following resources as guidance:

    ☐ CDE Closeout Guidance for Participants

    ☐ Professional Skills Assessment and Reflection

    ☐ Participant Evaluation of Host and Managing Organization Template

☐ Reflect on the experience as a Managing Organization. Utilize the following resources:

    ☐ Closeout Guidance for Managing Organizations

        ☐ Review Participant and Host assessments

        ☐ Gather testimonials

        ☐ Measure and communicate impact

See example Host survey and Participant survey questions from Career Launch Chicago

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

EXEMPLARS	Resources and Lessons Learned from the CDE Pilot, an article highlighting pilot sites from the Illinois State Board of Education's Career Exploration and Career Development Experiences initiative
	District 214 Academic Programs & Pathways Guidebook, which shares with parents and students how work-based learning is incorporated in the district's pathways
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT	Stakeholder Engagement Checklist, a detailed roadmap for engaging with a range of different stakeholder groups.
	Empathy Interviews, an overview and tools for conducting one-on-one conversations that use open-ended questions to elicit stories about specific experiences that help uncover unacknowledged needs from Community Design Partners.
	Implementation Strategies by Role from Great Schools Partnership, which lists equity-related pathway questions for students and families, teachers, administrators, partners, and policymakers.
	Equitable Community Engagement from Great Schools Partnership, which offers tools for all members of a school community—educators, students, parents, community members, and other stakeholders—who want to understand better what equitable community engagement is and why it's so important.