

Community Example: Navigating Liability

Approaches to Partner Engagement for Hosting Students Under 18

Schools and partners are finding effective ways to address concerns around liability and labor laws for students under 18 years old participating in work-based learning. They are engaging employer partners in myth-busting conversations about legal limitations for high school interns and carefully reviewing the Child Labor Bulletin 101 to identify what tasks are legally permissible and where they're documented.



I-WIN

Illinois Work-Based Learning
Innovation Network

Videos



At the I-WIN convening on December 14, 2022, [Valley Education for Employment System](#) (VALEES) shared how it is engaging employers in their region to be prepared to host and support young people in work-based learning opportunities, including internships.



[Morton Industries](#) and the [McHenry County Manufacturing Pathways Consortium](#) share how they support high school students (including student interns under age 18) to participate in career development experiences, including internships and apprenticeships in manufacturing.

Approaches to Navigating Liability

- Organizations including [Valley Education for Employment System](#), [Valley Industrial Association](#), and [GCAMP](#) are [engaging employer partners in myth-busting conversations](#) about legal limitations for high school interns and carefully reviewing the [Child Labor Bulletin 101](#) to identify what tasks are legally permissible and where they're documented.
 - For example, contrary to popular belief, many machine tool roles are not classified as hazardous under federal labor laws.
- [Leyden High School District 212](#) has also successfully collaborated with employer partners to complete their [work-based learning training agreement](#), helping to ease concerns for both the school and the businesses involved.

Employer-Facing One-Pagers

These resources were developed through a collaboration between the Illinois Manufacturers' Association and EdSystems. One-pager resources include:

- [Navigating Legalities and Logistics: Hosting Manufacturing Interns Under Age 18](#): Addressing employer concerns about hosting underage interns, this resource provides employer models and resources to support companies to confidently engage high school students in manufacturing internships while complying with regulations.
- [Download](#) the whole bundle.

I-WIN Roundtable Notes

At a February 2025 I-WIN roundtable, schools shared insights on how they are better understanding and navigating liability, including:

- If earning course credit for their internships, students are typically covered under their school district's insurance.
- Employers who formally hire students and take them through their onboarding process can provide coverage through workers' compensation.
- Adding a student intern to a company's workers' compensation policy typically doesn't increase the premium, as rates are based on job roles, not age.
- To ensure full protection, districts often advise employers to be added as "additional insured" on the school's certificate of insurance, a common requirement even for simple field trips.