



# HIGH SCHOOL APPRENTICESHIPS: A GUIDE FOR STARTING SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS

How can communities better prepare high school students for success and also ensure that businesses have the pipeline of skilled workers they need to thrive? Cities and states across the country are facing this dual challenge – and a growing number are looking to high school apprenticeships as a solution.

High school (HS) apprenticeship programs combine work-based, on-the-job learning with relevant technical education in the classroom. Students who participate in these programs graduate with a high school diploma, earn college credits, and industry credentials. They also start on a career path that continues after high school graduation – whether that is a continuation of their apprenticeship along with college, college only, apprenticeship only, or other full-time employment. HS apprenticeships

benefit businesses as well by providing a fresh source of talent developed from within their community.

This guide is a resource for high schools, colleges, businesses, community organizations, and others seeking to collaborate on high-quality HS apprenticeships in their communities. It covers the basics of building a HS apprenticeship program and includes examples of program strategies.



Additional resources on high school apprenticeship are available at  
[www.dol.gov/apprenticeship](http://www.dol.gov/apprenticeship).

# ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL HIGH SCHOOL APPRENTICESHIP

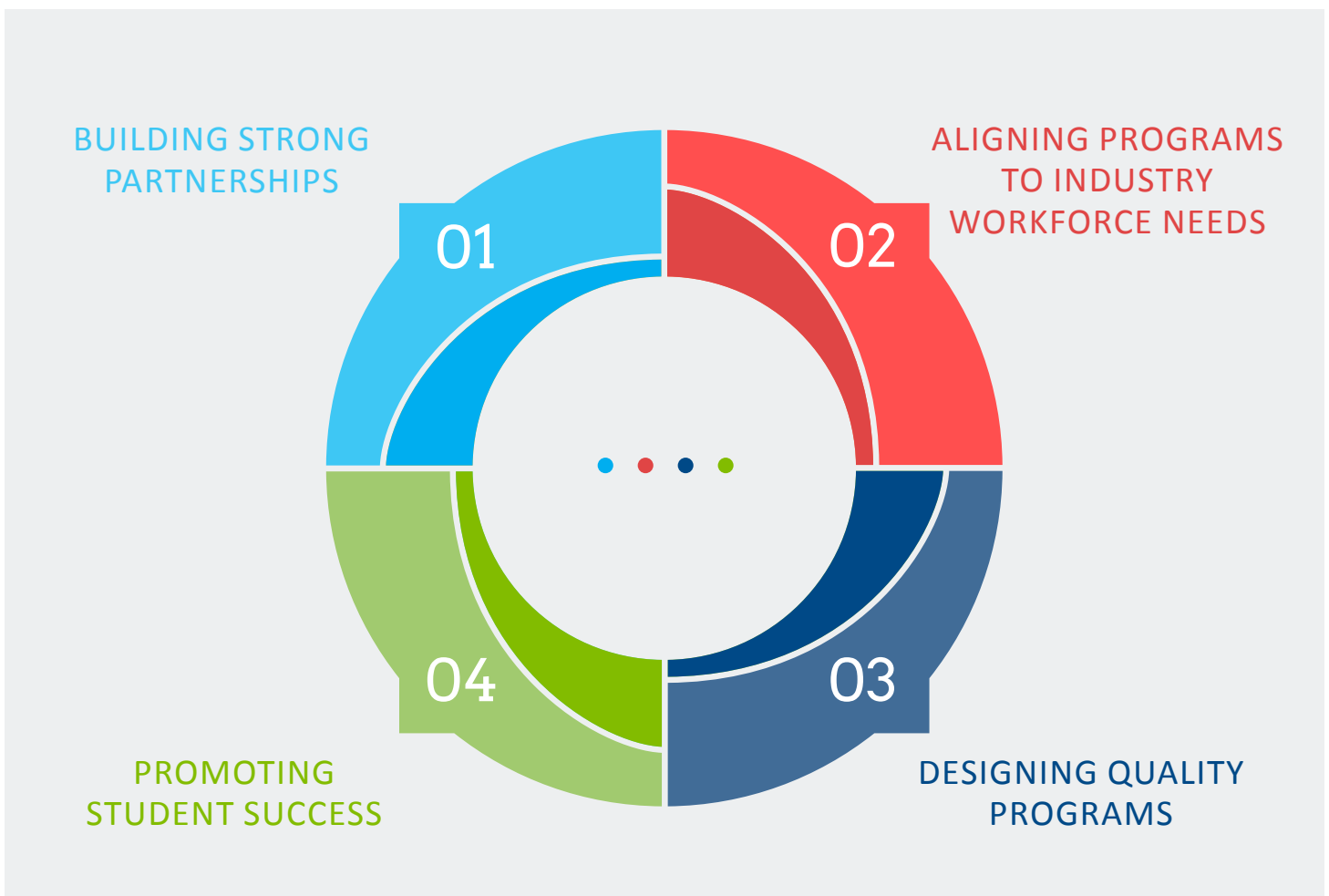
The guide is organized around four key elements necessary to make high school apprenticeship programs successful:

**1. BUILDING STRONG PARTNERSHIPS.** Strong partnerships among high schools and colleges, businesses, students and parents, and other community organizations are vital to successful HS apprenticeships. Each partner has a key role to play – and each supplies resources needed for high-quality programs.

**2. ALIGNING PROGRAMS TO INDUSTRY WORKFORCE NEEDS.** Successful HS apprenticeships are business-driven, and the programs must be aligned to the skill needs of businesses to be effective in helping businesses build a pipeline of future workers.

**3. DESIGNING QUALITY PROGRAMS.** HS apprenticeships can be created in multiple ways that work for businesses, school systems, and students, but all are based on high-quality on-the job learning combined with related classroom instruction. Successful programs also align coursework with both high school and college requirements so that students receive all educational credentials possible, and can continue their education.

**4. PROMOTING STUDENT SUCCESS.** Successful programs engage in thorough recruitment and selection processes, and provide students with the support they need to complete the apprenticeship and take the next steps to succeed in college and careers.



## WHY ARE HIGH SCHOOL APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS IMPORTANT?

High school is a critical time for development of career choices, and communities across the country are launching programs allowing high school students to pursue career-oriented coursework coupled with work-based learning opportunities. These programs have different names, high school apprenticeship, school-to-apprenticeship, or youth apprenticeship, but all have the same goals – providing students with access to high-quality, industry-focused training that combines classroom and on-the-job learning, and affordable pathways to college and careers in high-demand industries.

HS apprenticeship programs also provide businesses with solutions to their workforce needs. By training and mentoring young apprentices, businesses can develop employees who are trained to their precise specifications and have learned the company’s unique workplace culture. HS apprenticeship programs also provide a source of qualified workers, reducing recruitment costs and ensuring businesses have the workforce they need today and for the future. Additionally, HS apprenticeship programs are frequently linked to “adult” apprenticeships, referring to apprenticeships after high school in which businesses hire individuals (18 years of age and older) as full-time employees. Through effective partnerships, entry into adult apprenticeships can be facilitated through the HS programs.

HS apprenticeships are also valuable for school systems, as applied learning and hands-on experience may enhance school retention and graduation rates. These programs also create stronger linkages between high school and two- and four-year colleges, which often provide leadership, technical instruction, and support to programs. Building on college credits earned in high school, participating students are motivated to continue their education after graduation.

## WHAT ARE THE BASIC COMPONENTS OF HIGH SCHOOL APPRENTICESHIP?

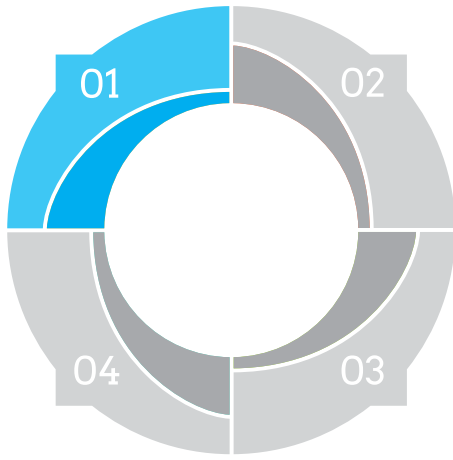
HS apprenticeships provide the foundation for students to choose among multiple pathways after high school, including enrolling in college, entering an adult apprenticeship program, beginning full-time work, or a combination of these options. Students participating in an apprenticeship select an industry or career area to study, in addition to their academic courses required for high school graduation. Since the legal age to begin work is 16 in most states, HS apprenticeships are typically designed for high school juniors and seniors. HS apprenticeship programs have two major components – classroom instruction and paid on-the-job learning with a mentor.

### CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

Businesses, high schools and colleges work together to develop suitable curriculum for classroom instruction, and students receive credits toward high school graduation, and, in many instances, credits toward related college programs. This technical instruction may be provided by any of those partners. When provided in the high school, there is no charge to students or parents; HS apprenticeship instruction provided by colleges or businesses is funded in a variety of ways, based on community resources.

### ON-THE-JOB LEARNING

Students in HS apprenticeship programs learn on-the-job skills by working at a business in the industry of their chosen career cluster. This allows them to apply the theory they are learning in the classroom to the real world of work. Businesses provide students with supervision and mentoring, ensuring that they learn not only the right way to carry out work tasks, but also the business’ culture and expectations. On-the-job learning helps students gain clarity on the specific types of careers they wish to pursue following high school, and provides businesses with a valuable recruitment strategy when they need new workers. Students earn minimum wage or above, and may receive raises as their skills increase. On-the-job learning may occur before or after school, during the school day, or during summers and other school breaks, and the schedule is planned collaboratively by businesses, schools and students.



# BUILDING STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are essential to the development of HS apprenticeships. Successful strategies result from multiple organizations within a community, region, or state that contribute and leverage their resources to form a strong, united approach. As a result, businesses gain the workforce talent they need and youth receive meaningful educational opportunities and work experience.

## KEY PARTNERS AND THEIR ROLES

**BUSINESSES** are always at the heart of apprenticeship strategies. They employ the apprentices, provide on-the-job learning, and are involved in recruitment activities and selecting apprentices. Businesses are also instrumental in developing the technical classroom training. They identify the skills and competencies needed for success on the job, which are then used to design the curriculum. In many cases, businesses – working in a consortium of companies or alone – initiate HS apprenticeships in their community by reaching out to workforce agencies, high schools, colleges, and industry associations to discuss their workforce challenges. These discussions become the foundation for building the program. In some HS apprenticeship programs, businesses provide financial resources or equipment, and help monitor program outcomes for continuous improvement.

**HIGH SCHOOLS** play a central role in many ways. They participate in the design of curriculum and, in many instances, provide the technical classroom instruction. Different high school programs and personnel can also play specific roles.

- High school personnel, frequently Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers or school counselors, are responsible for recruiting students and monitoring their success throughout the program.
- Some programs have dedicated HS apprenticeship coordinators, who work closely with teachers to ensure full coordination across the students' school and on-the-job activities.
- School administrators, such as superintendents and principals, promote and help to sustain partnerships for HS apprenticeship programs. They also work to align high school and college credits, and facilitate the integration of HS apprenticeships into students' overall educational program.
- CTE programs within high schools prepare students to be college- and job-ready for in-demand careers within their community. Increasingly, CTE teachers are partnering with HS apprenticeship coordinators – in addition to businesses and technical and community colleges – to ensure apprenticeship students attain the knowledge and skills needed for success in their chosen career cluster. (For more information on apprenticeship and CTE programs, visit the U.S Department of Education's webpage at [cte.ed.gov/initiatives/potential-of-apprenticeships-in-secondary-education](https://cte.ed.gov/initiatives/potential-of-apprenticeships-in-secondary-education)).





Successful engagement of high school teachers and counselors, as well as parents, is important for getting programs off the ground and sustaining them. In **North Carolina**, as part of a HS apprenticeship program in manufacturing, the participating companies host an “Educator Awareness Luncheon” for principals and teachers at the job site so they can see the opportunities available to students. Interested students are required to attend, along with a parent or guardian, an open house that includes a plant tour. This approach helps get parents on board to encourage and support students in the program, and also allows them to see in person that advanced manufacturing is a high-tech and safe industry that offers good careers.

Most **PARENTS/GUARDIANS** want their children to go to college, as they see this as a pathway to a solid career. When they learn that HS apprenticeship programs include college-level courses AND provide work experience, they realize that these programs can give their children a head start on their future after high school. Involving parents is important to getting students interested in HS apprenticeship and helping them make choices about their career field of interest.

**COLLEGES**, particularly community and technical colleges, are frequently partners in HS apprenticeship programs, and sometimes serve as

the lead organization for the program. Businesses may reach out to community and technical colleges when they need specific courses developed for current or prospective employees to learn new skills. As a result, college administrators and educators can help identify businesses to participate in a HS apprenticeship program. Colleges are also a key source for curriculum development and may deliver technical coursework to students. Colleges and high schools work together to ensure that students can attain industry-recognized credentials and certifications, and – whenever possible – to receive college credits for the apprenticeship-related coursework taken in high school.

The **Connecticut Office of Apprenticeship Training** has technology education consultants that support technical high schools in developing and implementing apprenticeship activities in their schools. In **Wisconsin**, state staff in the Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards have developed curriculum frameworks, forms and extensive guidance for youth apprenticeship programs to use. They also provide training and consultation to businesses and program coordinators.



In the **Edward J. Malloy Initiatives for Construction Skills** program, interested high school seniors from 19 of New York City’s career and technical high schools can prepare for adult apprenticeship programs in the building and construction trades. *Construction Skills* is an independent non-profit organization that serves as the intermediary between the high schools, the Building and Construction Trades Council, and apprenticeship sponsors. *Construction Skills* also provides program administration and works with liaisons in the high schools to recruit participants.

**STATE AGENCIES**, typically apprenticeship, workforce and education agencies, provide support for HS apprenticeship programs in several ways: developing, in concert with industry experts, the frameworks for curriculum and competencies in various industries; providing knowledge about applicable state laws, such as child labor and workers’ compensation requirements; helping with building partnerships and connecting with businesses; and supplying funding, outreach and marketing materials to promote and support local programs. Additionally, some states have found that legislation or state policy can strengthen cross-agency collaboration in designing successful HS apprenticeship programs.

**COMMUNITY** organizations are also vital to the support and sustainability of successful HS apprenticeship programs. Such partners may include Chambers of Commerce, workforce development organizations, United Way agencies, youth-focused organizations, and other community non-profit groups. These partners can play many roles, such as student recruitment or academic support, contributing funding, or providing leadership and oversight of the program.

## LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL MODELS

Each successful program has its own champions and drivers and different organizational approaches to partners working together. The flexibility for the right leader to emerge, and to develop approaches that reflect partners’ strengths, is one of the hallmarks of the HS apprenticeship model. Partners may wish to keep the following points in mind as they begin discussing the idea of a HS apprenticeship strategy.

- Programs may be organized at the state level (such as the statewide Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship program) or at the regional or local level (such as the Charleston Regional Youth Apprenticeship program).
- Strong leadership is a key component to success in HS apprenticeship programs. Having one central player coordinate efforts ensures that the program meets its goals and requirements, freeing up each partner to focus on its specific role. Cultivating relationships with businesses is typically a key role for program leadership.
- State programs often designate apprenticeship coordinators at the local level – within the high schools or at their partnering community or technical colleges. Such individuals are closely connected to the students and participating businesses, ensuring all have the resources and support they need for success. These coordinators may also serve as conduits within the schools, to monitor instructional alignment and attainment of student outcomes.

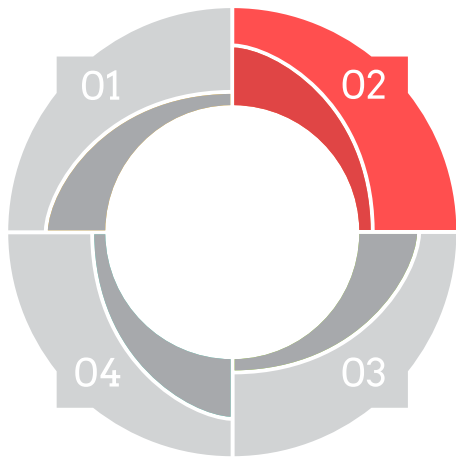
- Successful programs promote open and frequent communication among partners, seek feedback (especially from business partners), and establish program accountability and goals against which progress is measured. One approach is to develop local or regional advisory bodies, comprised of representatives from business, schools, and other key partners.

Through ongoing communication and periodic meetings, representatives can identify and solve challenges and determine how best to sustain and grow the program in their community.



Trident Technical College is the managing partner of the [Charleston Regional Youth Apprenticeship](#) program. They work with interested businesses and school systems to design and deliver technical instruction, recruit business partners, provide guidance and technical assistance to high schools, and work closely with the Chamber of Commerce regarding funding and program promotion. Several staff within the college are devoted to the success of the program.

[Wisconsin's Youth Apprenticeship program](#) is operated by 33 regional consortia that are led by a variety of partners. Consortium coordinators include regional education service agencies, school districts, technical colleges, Chambers of Commerce, workforce development boards, and non-profit organizations, depending on each community's resources and specific needs. The consortium coordinators are responsible for recruiting businesses and students, ensuring that curriculum is taught to employers' specifications, providing technical assistance to businesses and high schools, and gathering and analyzing program data to evaluate and improve the program.



# ALIGNING PROGRAMS TO INDUSTRY WORKFORCE NEEDS

Businesses – in industries ranging from advanced manufacturing, to healthcare and information technology, and many more – are choosing HS apprenticeships to train their next generation workforce. Many of the businesses participating in HS apprenticeships also have apprenticeship programs for their adult workers, while others find these programs help them recruit and train entry-level employees that may then progress in the organization.

As described in the previous section, businesses are central to apprenticeship programs and play many key roles. To achieve the two primary goals of HS apprenticeships – preparing students for future careers and providing a pipeline of workers for businesses – programs must meet industries’ workforce needs.

## EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT AND IDENTIFYING WORKFORCE NEEDS

Regions and communities interested in developing HS apprenticeship programs typically begin by partnering across economic development, workforce development, and educational agencies. Two common approaches include:

- Contacting area businesses to identify in which occupations they currently need additional workers, and in which occupations they project having skilled workforce shortages in the next two to five years. Workforce agencies, economic development groups, and others engage in these activities routinely, and communities interested in launching a HS apprenticeship program can access this information from these partners.
- Tapping into existing regional sector strategies and determining the short- and long-term needs of the employers within that sector. This approach allows partners to build a model that provides businesses with a pipeline of workers trained to their specifications.

Once occupational targets are identified, high school and college partners then work with the employers to identify the specific skills and competencies they need workers to have. These skills and competencies become the basis of the on-the-job learning and classroom instruction components of the HS apprenticeship. Some state agencies provide support for development of appropriate curricula, through frameworks developed in consultation with industry and apprenticeship experts. As a result, local HS apprenticeship programs can access an industry-approved structure on which to build coursework and on-the-job learning skills to be mastered in the HS apprenticeship program.





The **Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship Program** focuses on 11 career clusters. State staff in apprenticeship and education work closely with industry representatives to develop skills frameworks that regional programs can use in building career cluster-specific curriculum. This ensures that curricula include a level of rigor and standardization that provides students with portable credentials recognized by Wisconsin employers throughout the industry.

## BUSINESS COLLABORATION

While one business can provide the impetus for a HS apprenticeship program to be developed, frequently a business will form a consortium with others in its industry to build HS apprenticeships. This model may be a few businesses willing to work with their competition, or may involve an industry association bringing together key businesses within the region. There are several benefits to a collaborative approach, such as:

- Businesses can share the cost of developing on-the-job learning competencies and instructional materials.
- This approach can prepare a pipeline of skilled workers for an industry sector within the region, promoting future growth for the sector. This may also spur the location of suppliers and other downstream businesses in the industry.
- While each business may only need a couple apprentices, collaboration permits high schools and colleges to deliver curriculum more efficiently to a full classroom of students.
- Taking a partnership approach can enable small businesses to participate, where they could not develop a program on their own.

Finally, partners working to develop a HS apprenticeship program may also find value in identifying a business champion. A champion is a company that is committed to HS apprenticeship and is willing to sell its value to other companies in its industry or community. Word-of-mouth endorsement by a leading business can be instrumental in encouraging other businesses to join. Similarly, media coverage of a company's success can promote the program to additional businesses and industry groups.

**In Colorado**, HS apprenticeships are led by industry associations in the information technology, finance, business, and advanced manufacturing sectors. These organizations guide the formation of regional programs, as they know best what skills are needed by businesses. Developing business consortia also helps spread costs, as the overall effort and cost of establishing a program can be shared among businesses. Additionally, high schools' costs are better managed with a full class of students, and participating businesses can "share" a class of students receiving technical instruction although each business may only hire a few apprentices.



# DESIGNING QUALITY PROGRAMS

Each HS apprenticeship program is designed to reflect the specific features and components that will best serve businesses and students. There are, however, several elements that high-quality programs share:

- Classroom instruction that aligns coursework across high school and college requirements
- On-the-job learning with strong mentoring
- Linkages to adult apprenticeship programs in the area
- Compliance with applicable workers' compensation and child labor laws

## DEVELOPING CURRICULUM FOR CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

As noted earlier, CTE programs in high schools play a significant role in HS apprenticeships. The curriculum used for HS apprenticeship programs is often built using one or more of the 16 nationally-recognized career clusters that are used in CTE programs. Each cluster has defined career pathways with established plans of study.

The career cluster framework identifies the academic and technical coursework students will need to complete in the HS apprenticeship. Such

curricula are rigorous, and are based on national standards that have been validated by industry experts. They are aligned across high school and college programs, and lead to the award of an industry-recognized credential or certificate. Building on the foundation of existing CTE programs can help a community provide its growing businesses with the skilled workforce they need to thrive.

(For more information on the national career cluster framework, visit [careertech.org/career-clusters](http://careertech.org/career-clusters)).



## ALIGNING HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE EDUCATION

HS apprenticeship programs must ensure that coursework fulfills the requirements students will need to receive a high school diploma. Many programs also provide students with the opportunity to earn college credits, typically at a community or technical college. Earning credits toward an associate's degree enhances the program's value for students and their parents – as

this instruction is often provided at no cost to the student – and gives students incentive to continue their education after high school. Curricula are also typically designed in a way that students can “stack” their high school and industry credentials, providing them with a head start toward continued education and/or adult apprenticeship programs.

**In the [Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship program](#), through the partnership between the Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards, the Department of Public Instruction, and the technical college system, program completers are eligible for advanced standing in an associate's degree program at any of Wisconsin's technical colleges. As a result, students may enter the college having completed introductory courses in their field of study. This is known as “dual credit,” as students are gaining credits towards both high school requirements and college. Many HS apprenticeship programs incorporate dual credit which adds value for students and parents – college credits without the tuition fees.**

## DEVELOPING ON-THE-JOB LEARNING

Through on-the-job learning, students apply the knowledge they are learning in the classroom and gain paid work experience in a career field of interest. Since youth are legally able to begin working in most job settings at the age of 16, the work-based component of HS apprenticeship typically begins in a student's junior year. Students are paid by employers for the hours they work at the job site.

Each program determines how a student's time will be split between classroom and on-the-job learning, through agreements among participating employers, high schools and post-secondary schools. This also applies to the number of hours HS students will work. While the schedule for on-the-job learning varies, a typical approach is that students work a certain number of hours during the school year and then full-time during summers.

**In the [Tech Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky \(TRACK\)](#) program with Dr. Schneider Automotive Systems, students attend classes at their technical high school in the morning and then work at the company from 10:30 AM to 4:00 PM, four days a week. On Fridays, students are in school all day. During summer months, students work full-time at Dr. Schneider. At the end of the TRACK program, students have completed 2,000 on-the-job training hours and at least 288 hours of related technical instruction at the school – and have earned industry-recognized credentials.**

## INCORPORATING WORK-BASED MENTORING

During their on-the-job learning experience, students receive training and guidance from an experienced professional. This mentoring is sometimes the defining factor in a student's success in the program. The role of the mentor, who is sometimes also the supervisor but may be a different individual at the business, is to help apprentices learn the employability skills and specific work culture of the organization.

For many students, this is their first exposure to the world of work, and having the opportunity to develop these skills will serve them throughout their careers. Mentors give apprentices the chance to share their ideas about the tasks and skills they are learning, providing the dual benefit of the business gaining a fresh perspective, and the student perceiving that their input matters. Additionally, businesses report that employees who serve as mentors gain a unique fulfillment in their jobs, knowing they are shaping the next generation of workers for their company.



**The Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship program emphasizes the importance of mentoring to student success. Wisconsin state staff provide mentor training and guidance for participating businesses, to orient company employees to this new role.**

## DEVELOPING LINKAGES TO ADULT APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

Whenever possible, it is valuable to cultivate strong linkages to adult apprenticeship programs in the community. Companies and labor organizations with adult apprenticeship programs may be interested in recruiting students once they have completed their HS apprenticeship and graduated. Providing opportunities for HS apprenticeship graduates to enter adult apprenticeship programs helps students continue in their chosen career field after high school. Some states require that HS programs develop agreements with one or more apprenticeship programs, while others encourage – but don't require – this direct connection.

In addition, adult apprenticeship programs can bring the knowledge of industry skills, competencies, and work-based curricula into HS programs, and can guide the development of appropriate instructional materials. Apprenticeship programs also often have marketing materials that can introduce school personnel, students, and parents to the apprenticeship model.



## ADDRESSING LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Businesses may raise concerns about child labor laws and liability in employing youth during initial discussions about HS apprenticeship programs. Successful programs provide information and work with businesses to help them navigate federal and state child labor laws and regulations.

Every state has its own workers' compensation laws. In some states, requirements for minors are the same as for workers 18 years of age

and older. Where state law includes additional requirements for youth, businesses may have concerns about covering HS apprentices. To address this, some states permit high schools to extend their liability insurance to cover enrolled students participating in work-based learning. (For more information on child labor laws and workers' compensation laws in various states, please visit [apprenticeshipusa.workforcegps.org](https://www.apprenticeshipusa.workforcegps.org)).



- In the **Charleston Regional Youth Apprenticeship program**, the four participating high schools provide liability insurance for their student learners at the work site, removing this burden from businesses in the program.
- **The Kentucky TRACK program** partners with a staffing agency to serve as the “employer of record.” This allows students to be covered under the agency’s workers’ compensation liability insurance – and businesses don’t have to provide additional liability insurance for youth workers.
- In the **Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship program**, youth are identified as “student learners,” which, under state law, allows businesses to employ them in a wider range of occupations. State staff are available to help businesses navigate this issue, and contract with a consulting company to provide risk management services to participating school systems.





# PROMOTING STUDENT SUCCESS

HS apprenticeship programs can add value for any student, from those planning to go to a four-year college to those exploring options after high school. For college-bound students, engaging in an apprenticeship can help them clarify their career aspirations and gain real-world work experience. For students who are less certain of their future choices, experiential learning has been shown to increase retention and graduation from high school. And for all students, participation in HS apprenticeship offers career exploration, work experience, and a jump start toward post-secondary education and job opportunities.

## RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

A thorough recruitment and selection process is important for several reasons: to generate interest and enthusiasm in the HS apprenticeship program; to select students who have a good chance of successful completion; and to provide potential future employees who are a good fit for businesses.

To recruit new apprentices, companies and schools hold career fairs, parent-student meetings, company tours, and ask prior HS apprentices to provide first-hand accounts of their experiences. Additionally, webpages or brochures geared to high school students and their parents can help them understand the benefits of the program and how it works. In many programs, recruitment focuses on youth traditionally under-represented in apprenticeship programs, such as women and minorities. School counselors, HS apprenticeship coordinators and CTE teachers frequently lead the recruitment efforts.

Once potential candidates are identified by school counselors or others involved in the selection process, businesses select the students to be their apprentices. Many programs require formal application packages, which may include a resume and references. This approach not only introduces students to common employment application methods, but also makes the selection process easier for participating businesses. After the candidate pool has been narrowed down, employers conduct interviews to select their apprentices for the program, much like they would in hiring entry-level employees. Businesses typically require the students they select for the program to have reliable transportation to and from the job site.

**North Carolina** has a multi-step recruitment process for its HS apprenticeship program with advanced manufacturing companies.

1. **Educator Awareness** – CTE teachers and principals of participating schools attend an event at the manufacturing companies.
2. **Recruitment** – Recruitment events are held at schools, and interested students and their parent/guardian attend an open house so they can see first-hand the high-tech work of advanced manufacturing and the opportunities available at the companies.
3. **Application** – Students submit an application for the apprenticeship.
4. **Orientation and Screening** – Selected students participate in a four-day orientation in the evening, which serves as a screening and interview process. Students are taught basic skills needed on the job, use light machinery (under close supervision), participate in a group project, and are tested on what they learned throughout the four days.

## PROGRAM SUPPORTS

A key benefit of the HS apprenticeship model is that on-the-job learning is provided at no cost to the student or his/her family. However, some students may need help with the costs for getting started with the program, such as uniforms, equipment, or instructional

materials. To address these needs, partners may collaborate to identify sources of support, including participating employers, Chambers of Commerce, the school system or technical college, or regional workforce programs for which the student may qualify.

## INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS

High school and college partners work to align coursework in the apprenticeship so that students graduate from high school and receive credits toward a post-secondary degree. The other source of credentials comes from

the on-the-job learning. As part of the HS apprenticeship, students can gain credentials and certificates that are recognized by employers in that industry, which gives them a head start in their career field after high school.



**In the Kentucky TRACK program, a student's successful completion promotes acceptance into industry-recognized apprenticeship programs, with time worked during their HS program counting toward apprenticeship hours. Connecticut's pre-apprenticeships for high school students are registered with the state Office of Apprenticeship Training, ensuring that students completing the program's curriculum receive credit toward the classroom instructional hours for adult apprenticeship programs.**



# GETTING STARTED WITH HIGH SCHOOL APPRENTICESHIP

KEEPING IN MIND THE FOUR ELEMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS, THE STEPS OUTLINED BELOW CAN HELP A COMMUNITY TO LAUNCH A HS APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM.

- 1. Identify the need.** Has a business in the region requested support in building a pipeline of future workers? Is the community focusing on training individuals for jobs in a particular industry sector? Identify the problem for which HS apprenticeship can be the solution.
- 2. Organize a steering committee of key partners.** Representatives from businesses, high schools, community and technical colleges, workforce organizations, and other community partners will all be needed to build a quality program.
- 3. Identify a lead organization.** While many partners will be at the table, one entity needs to assume leadership to drive the effort forward and to ensure all program elements are aligned and meet the needs of businesses, schools and students.
- 4. Recruit multiple businesses.** Multiple business partners promote economies of scale in developing on-the-job learning competencies and instructional materials, and in delivery of classroom instruction. A multi-employer approach can also encourage the participation of small businesses in the community.
- 5. Identify target occupational areas.** This is typically determined by the employers participating in the program, but Chambers of Commerce and other economic development partners may help guide the selection of career clusters as well. Once the occupational areas are identified, the program curriculum and on-the-job learning elements are developed to meet the needs of participating businesses.
- 6. Develop operational procedures.** The nuts and bolts of the program also need to be developed, such as communication structures, student supports, program outcomes to measure and track, and the review of results for continuous improvement, program sustainability and growth.
- 7. Recruit and select students.** Develop multiple outreach strategies to get students interested in HS apprenticeships. Build selection processes that ensure students understand the level of program commitment required, while providing businesses with the information they need to make sound choices in selecting apprentices.