This month we feature a toolkit that shares practical tips and sample materials for developing virtual internships and an interview with Advance CTE Policy Associate, Brice Thomas.

**Dallas Virtual Internship Toolkit**

While student employment and work-based learning can look different, one of the most well-known forms of student employment is the internship. In 2021, in response to the coronavirus pandemic, regional education and workforce partners in Dallas, Texas created a comprehensive toolkit to help deliver internships to secondary learners virtually.

The Virtual Internship Toolkit is a resource designed to help grow the number of high-quality virtual internship experiences for high school students by providing best practice-informed guidance that can support employers and school staff to develop programs more efficiently. Despite its name, the virtual toolkit can also be used for creating in-person internships.

The toolkit includes checklists, practical tips and sample materials and identifies four key elements a virtual internship should incorporate:

- Meaningful projects;
- Welcoming community;
- Networking and mentorship; and
- Clear expectations and feedback.
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Additional Resources

State Work-Based Learning Innovation Toolkit

New Skills ready network 2020-2021 Snapshot: Dallas, Texas

Preparing Learners For Energy Careers

Getting to Know Advance CTE: Brice Thomas

As a State Policy Associate, Brice Thomas leads the organization’s state policy tracking and manages the Learning that Works Resource Center. He also manages the State Work-Based Learning Innovation tracker and is currently working on a research brief concerning Summer Youth Employment Programs (SYEP).

Q: How can states support the creation of work-based...
learning experiences, such as internship programs?

A. States have a few different ways to support the creation of both in-person and virtual internship programs. The first is through funding; states can create financial incentives for industry partners interested in partnering with local school systems. States can also develop specific toolkits that have clear instructions for the roles and responsibilities of both districts and industry partners to use as guidance. Additionally, states can leverage their industry partnerships to connect industry and districts, especially if developing a virtual internship program.

Q: What states, outside of Texas, are implementing virtual internships?

A. Based on the tracker, a few states have specific guidance on building great in-person internship programs. Alaska, however, is the only one we currently have that specifically addresses the nuances of creating a virtual internship program.

Q. Can you briefly share what the State Work-Based Learning Innovation Tracker is and how often it’s updated?

A. The State Work-Based Learning Innovation Tracker links publicly accessible work-based learning toolkits from across all 50 states and U.S. territories. The tracker is updated on a rolling basis to try to protect the integrity of the information we provide. If you have any updates or addendums, please do not hesitate to send them to bthomas@careertech.org.