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FHI 360 WORK-BASED LEARNING MANUAL: A HOW-TO GUIDE FOR WORK-BASED LEARNING

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction to Work-Based Learning	1
2. Guest Speakers.....	15
3. Workplace Tours	27
4. College and Career Fairs.....	42
5. Informational Interviews.....	58
6. Job Shadows.....	67
7. Internships	85
8. Teacher Workplace Tours	112
9. Teacher Externships	122

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include program design (e.g., the creation of models, protocols, tools and materials), project management, professional development, school-based coaching, creation of local and national networks, and collective impact and program evaluation. We have worked at the intersection of schools and communities for nearly 40 years, solving critical issues in education, health and youth development through projects in 48 states and with more than 400 school districts. Our staff are experts in education, health services, youth development, gender, school improvement, nutrition, communications, research and evaluation, technology and advocacy.

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9. Teacher Externships

9.1 Overview

What are Teacher Externships?

Teacher externships are work-based learning and professional development opportunities that provide teachers extended exposure to contemporary work environments and the types of careers their students may pursue. They are hands-on learning experiences that help teachers enrich their classroom pedagogy by using real-world applications of the academic content they teach. By having their own WBL experiences, teachers also can become better-equipped to prepare students for WBL activities. Externships involve explicit preparation, reflection during and after the experiences, and completion of specific products, such as lesson plans.

Externships offer teachers opportunities to build personal relationships with employers and the employees who are their colleagues during their externships and thus enable the participating teachers to become ambassadors for WBL programs. After hosting teacher externships, employers may become more willing to engage in other WBL activities.

While student internships are career preparation activities for students who have yet to enter the workforce, teacher externships are opportunities for experienced professionals to enhance their knowledge and skills in ways that will benefit their students over the long term. Teachers can also benefit the employers who host their externships by bringing fresh perspectives to challenges in the workplace.

Which Teachers Participate in Teacher Externships?

All teachers can benefit from teacher externships, especially those who work with 7th- through 12th-grade students who participate in WBL activities. Externships may also be appropriate opportunities for counselors, career advisors, and other educators who work directly with students. Participation in teacher externships should be voluntary. Depending on the design of the externship program, teachers may earn continuing education or graduate credits. Most are paid at least nominal stipends.

How Are Teacher Externships Structured?

Teacher externships usually take place during the summer, typically for 30 to 40 hours per week for a period of one to eight weeks. As with other WBL activities, the length and structure of teacher externships should reflect local needs and opportunities (e.g., availability of positions, teacher interests, or funding for stipends). Teacher externs typically meet periodically to reflect, share observations, or discuss ideas for how to use their externship experiences to enrich their teaching. Other reflection activities might include blogging, journaling, or writing articles for publication.

The content of each teacher externship should be agreed upon by both the employer and the teacher, with the WBL coordinator or school administrator playing a facilitating role. Often, teachers work on projects that provide real value to the employers and can be completed in the designated timeframe. Examples of teacher externship projects include: research on operating efficiencies between departments; process redesign; or market research. Alternatively, teachers might rotate through several departments within an organization, perhaps filling in for vacationing employees, to learn about several careers in which their students may be interested. Externships should not be used to fill positions that otherwise would be available to part- or full-time employees.

During their externships, teachers are often expected to develop lesson plans that use real-world work situations to teach academic content. The lesson plans are typically presented to their employer hosts and shared among participating teachers and other district and school staff at the end of the externships.

Teacher externships are usually compensated in the form of stipends. Funding for stipends may be provided by employers, chambers of commerce, economic development agencies, districts or schools, or local philanthropies. Colleges may participate by awarding continuing education or graduate credits. Decisions about stipends and credits need to be made early in the planning process to ensure that adequate information is in place for outreach to employers and teachers. Because teacher externships usually take place in the summer, a principal or district staff member will need to be available “on call” to help resolve any problems that may arise.

To learn more about well-established teacher externship programs in three locations across the United States, see the *Resources* section.

9.2 How to Implement Teacher Externships

Successful teacher externships require collaboration, communication, and preparation by school and district administrators, employer organizations, employers, and colleges. Teacher externships require extensive planning, which should begin early in the school year. As noted in the *Introduction*, the following steps are involved in implementing a teacher externship program.

1. Work with district and/or school administrators, representatives of employers and employer associations, and college representatives to determine the scope and structure of the externship program, including policies that will govern teacher selection, stipends, and academic credit as well as the roles each partner will play.
2. Budget for any district or school contribution to extern stipends. Determine funding expectations of employers who host teacher externs.
3. Assess teacher interest in externships and identify which industries and employers should be targeted for recruitment as hosts.
4. Recruit employers to host externships; because hosting an externship requires a significant commitment from an employer, this may be a lengthy process.
5. Select teacher applicants but allow host employers to interview and select the teachers for externships.
6. Facilitate the design of each externship, working with both the teacher and the employer.
7. Determine who will monitor implementation of externships during the summer, resolve any problems that arise, and provide logistical support as needed. (Note: Existing externship programs have found that having an administrator “on call” is all they need and that the need to call on that person seldom, if ever, arises.)
8. Provide structured opportunities for teachers to reflect.
9. Obtain evaluations from teachers and employers.
10. Recognize participating teachers, employers, employees, and college partners.

Due to the complexity of planning and implementing teacher externships, the WBL coordinator would be well-advised to start on a very small scale. Once a track record has been built and the challenging issues resolved, expansion can go forward with greater confidence. The following pages provide a more detailed description of the implementation steps listed above, presented in the form of a time line, which can be condensed or stretched out based on local circumstances.

9.3 Suggested Implementation Time Line

Note: Throughout this manual, the term WBL coordinator (typically, a district or school staff member) is used to refer to the individual responsible for supporting the planning and implementation of WBL activities. In the case of teacher externships, many of the responsibilities should be assumed by school administrators and teachers. The WBL coordinator’s responsibilities should include employer recruitment, maintaining the WBL database, and providing logistical support.

The WBL coordinator should refer to the overall WBL plan (see *Introduction*), if there is one, to ensure that implementation of teacher externships for teachers from specific schools and employers is coordinated with other WBL activities planned for the same schools or employers. Both the employers and the school staff will appreciate it if the WBL coordinator initiates contact for teacher externships in that larger context. The WBL coordinator should be careful in communicating with employers to avoid confusion if recruitment for student internships and teacher externships is occurring in the same time frame.

The WBL coordinator is assumed to be the person responsible for completing or assigning the tasks listed below, except where otherwise noted.

At or before the beginning of the school year

- Convene the appropriate stakeholders (e.g., district and/or school administrators, representatives of employers and/or employer associations, and college representatives) to design the externship program for the following summer, determine the policies that should govern its implementation, and define the roles that each stakeholder should play. Some of the basic policy choices are summarized in the table below.

<p>Number of externships (goal)</p>	<p>Factors may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Teacher interest. -Funding availability for extern stipends. -Outlook for employer recruitment. -Capacity of district, school, college, or other entity to provide logistical support during the summer. -Value of starting small and expanding over time.
<p>Budget considerations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Amount of stipend and number of externships. -Fees for teachers to earn credits (if not paid by teachers). -Host employers’ expected contributions. -Other funding sources (e.g., district, school, college, or local philanthropies).
<p>Criteria and process for selecting teachers</p>	<p>Possible criteria include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Specific subjects or grade levels. -Involvement with preparing students for WBL activities. -Interest in specific high-demand industries/employers. <p>Selection process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Application. -Selection of finalists by school administrators. -Employer interviews of candidates. -Final selection by employers.

Will teachers earn credit?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continuing education or graduate credits? -Identification of which colleges will award credits. -Requirements (e.g., hours and deliverables) to earn credit. -Fees required for earning credit and who will pay.
Employer recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -WBL coordinator to draw on multiple resources (e.g., WBL database and personal networks of district and school staff) to identify and recruit host employers. -Assistance from chamber of commerce, economic development agency, workforce development board, or state department of labor or commerce. -Targeted employers based on teacher interests.
Scheduling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Duration of externship (might vary among employers). -Hours per week (might vary among employers). -Frequency of meetings of teacher externs.
Work and learning plan for externships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Goals and plans developed jointly by employers and teachers. -Special projects of value to employers or rotation through multiple departments. -Work assignments that are intellectually challenging and rigorous. -Specific learning goals negotiated among teacher, employer, and college (if credit is to be awarded).
Supervision expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Employers to supervise day-to-day work. -Supervisory role for colleges if they award credits. -Principal or WBL coordinator to ensure that teachers are accountable for deliverables (during or after externship). -Teachers to convene their own reflection meetings during the summer. -On-call district or school administrator for troubleshooting any problems that arise.
Teacher responsibilities and deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Meet employer expectations for punctuality, workplace behavior and attire, and quality of work. -Organize and participate in individual and group reflection activities. -Document achievement of learning goals. -Produce at least (number) of lesson plans that use workplace experience to enrich the teaching of academic subjects.

- Complete the process of making the policy decisions noted above, assigning roles, and securing necessary funding before starting to recruit teachers and employers.

Six months before the externships

- Assess teacher interest in externships and identify which industries or employers are of greatest interest.
- Review employer outreach section of the *Introduction* and begin targeted employer recruitment. Sample recruitment emails are provided in the *Resources* section, as is a form to use to confirm employer participation.
- Work with employers interested in hosting externships to identify the work the extern will be expected to complete and define what they would look for in a teacher candidate. The employer checklist in the *Resources* section can be used for this task.

- **(Principals or WBL coordinator)** Conduct initial teacher application and selection process, designating more finalists than there are anticipated slots so that employers can interview pre-qualified candidates and make their final selections. A sample application is provided in the *Resources* section.

Four to three months before the externships

- When employers and teachers are ready, have teacher candidates who meet the employers' specifications send introductory notes to the employer hosts with their resumes. Allow employers to select which candidates they would like to interview.
- Continue outreach to employers and extern selection process, as needed, until recruitment goals are met.
- **(Teachers)** Make appointments for interviews.
- **(Employers)** Select teacher externs.

Three to two months before the externships

- Facilitate meetings between teachers and their workplace supervisors to develop work and learning plans for the externships and define deliverables that will be expected. If credits are to be offered, college representatives should review the plans to ensure that they meet the criteria for awarding credit. (Note: These meetings could take place closer to the time of the externship if the employer needs more time to determine what its needs are. However, teachers need to know whether and when they will be participating in externships so that they and their families can for their summer breaks.)
- Facilitate meeting(s) between college representatives and teachers who may be seeking credit for their externships to determine the role of the college in overseeing an externship, defining what deliverables will be required, and the procedure for paying fees. (Unless the district or school has planned and budgeted for these fees, the teachers may be responsible for paying them.)

Two months before the externships

- Touch base with teachers and workplace supervisors to review and reconfirm the work and learning plans and make sure everyone knows what is expected of them.
- **(Principals and teachers)** Agree on deliverables for reflection activities and lesson plans to be produced during and after externships.
- **(Teachers)** Decide among themselves when, where, and how frequently they will meet as a group for reflection during their externships.
- **(Principals, other administrators, or WBL coordinator)** Work with employers, teachers, and college representatives (if engaged) to develop plans for progress reports and submission of deliverables.

One month before the externships

- Touch base with teachers and host employers to reconfirm plans and expectations.
- Make sure that procedures are in place for documenting hours worked, stipend payments, progress reports, reflection meetings, and deliverables.
- **(Teachers)** Touch base with college representatives, if seeking credit for externships, to make sure that criteria, procedures, and fees for awarding credit are clearly understood.

One week before the externships

- Send reminder to teachers and workplace supervisors with all contact information, including the "on-call" district or school administrator, so that any problems that arise can be addressed promptly.

During the externships

- **(Teachers)** Convene reflection meetings at the intervals previously designated. These are opportunities to share externship experiences, get ideas for resolving on-the-job challenges, report progress on work and learning plans, and try out lesson plan ideas for applying their externship experiences to classroom teaching. These meetings might also be occasions for presentations by employers about industry trends, workplace skills, training programs, or other topics that may be useful and interesting to teachers and their students.

One day to one week after the externships

- Send email to employer hosts and workplace supervisors to thank them for providing teacher externship opportunities and ask them to complete evaluation forms. Send emails to teachers asking them to complete evaluation forms as well. Samples of both are provided in the *Resources* section.
- **(Teachers)** Send thank-you emails to host employers and the employees who supervised them directly.
- **(College representatives)** Meet with teachers to review their documentation and deliverables for earning credit. Touch base with employers if additional information is needed from them.

At the beginning of the school year

- Schedule time for teacher externs to share their new lesson plans and externship experiences with colleagues at their schools and across the district.
- Collect and review employer and teacher evaluations.
- Follow up with employers and teachers regarding concerns or comments, as needed.
- Consider holding a closing event where teachers present their externship accomplishments and employers share their views.

9.4 Teacher Externship Resources

Examples of externship programs: WBL coordinators should review the web sites below for descriptions of existing teacher externship programs in California, Connecticut, and North Dakota. These offer several suggestions for the design of externships.

- Teacher Externships, Architectural Foundation of San Francisco
<http://www.afsf.org/programs/afsf-teacher-externship-program/>
- Teacher Externships, Connecticut Business and Industry Association
<http://www.cbia.com/edf/Externship.htm>
- Educators in Industry, North Dakota Department of Commerce
<https://www.workforce.nd.gov/workforce/TeacherinIndustry/>

Note: These forms can be printed with expanded space for written responses or adapted in other ways.

WBL coordinator:

- Outreach email to employer
- Email from one employer to another
- Participation form

Employer:

- Checklist/expectations
- Evaluation

Teacher:

- Application form
- Evaluation

Sample Email to Employer from WBL Coordinator

Good Morning,

My name is John Doe, and I work for the XYZ district or school. I would like to request that you consider having a teacher from (district or school) work with you this summer to gain first-hand exposure to the kinds of careers for which she/he is helping to prepare students. We call this a teacher externship.

By offering an externship, your organization will be able to work with an experienced professional who is prepared to complete a project or other valuable assignments. In addition to classroom instruction, these teachers help provide work-based learning opportunities for students, such as job shadows, workplace tours, and internships. Externships can give teachers valuable insights into how they can better prepare their students for careers in your industry and how they can incorporate real-world examples into their lesson plans.

Externships are typically scheduled for the summer for a period of ## to ## weeks. Teachers bring value to your organization, not only through the work they complete, but also by the fresh perspectives they bring. Employers often report that hosting teacher externs is a rewarding experience for their employees.

I would like the opportunity to answer any questions you may have, send you more information, and work with you to shape an externship that will benefit your organization, the teacher extern, and his or her students. If you would like to host a teacher extern, please complete the attached participation form or contact me to discuss how we might move forward.

Thank you,

John Doe, Title
XYZ District or School
Contact information

Sample Email for Employers to Forward

Good Morning,

My name is Jane Doe, and I lead the marketing and communications department for (Blue Star Telephone Company), which has been working with teachers and students from (XYZ district or school) for (how long?). I would like to encourage you to consider hosting a teacher who would work with you for an extended period during the summer. The teacher would gain first-hand exposure to the kinds of careers for which he/she is helping to prepare students and ideas for how to incorporate real-world examples into his or her lesson plans. We call this a teacher externship.

By offering an externship, your organization will be able to work with an experienced professional who is prepared to complete a project or other valuable assignments. In addition to classroom instruction, these teachers help provide work-based learning opportunities for students, such as job shadows, workplace tours, and internships. Externships can give teachers valuable insights into how they can better prepare their students for careers in your industry and how they can incorporate real-world examples into their lesson plans. We've found them to be rewarding experiences for our employees, who value the fresh perspectives that teacher externs can provide.

If you are interested in exploring the idea of hosting a teacher externship, please contact (WBL coordinator name and contact info) or complete the enclosed participation form. (WBL coordinator) will work with you to plan an externship that will benefit your organization, the teacher, and his or her students.

Thank you,
Jane Doe, title
Organization
Contact information

Teacher Externship Employer Participation Form (WBL coordinator to fill in name and contact information)

Teacher externships provide teachers with hands-on exposure to the careers for which they are preparing students while completing a project or doing other valuable work for the employer. Externships may run for ## to ## weeks during the summer. Teachers bring value to your business, not only through the work they complete but also by bringing fresh perspectives. Employers often report that hosting teacher externs is a rewarding experience for their employees.

Please complete the following information and return it to the work-based learning (WBL) coordinator by (date). He or she will confirm receipt, send you more information about hosting a teacher extern, and contact you to work together to plan a teacher externship.

Company/organization:	
Industry/business type:	
Address:	
Business unit(s) (i.e., departments or functional areas) in which teacher will work:	
Main contact name:	
Phone:	Email:
Signature:	
WBL coordinator name and contact information:	

Your support of work-based learning opportunities such as teacher externships is a valuable complement to classroom learning and helps teachers better prepare their students for further education and careers. Thank you!

Teacher Externship Employer Checklist/Expectations (WBL coordinator to fill in contact information)

To help you prepare, we have created the following checklist of what you can expect as we work together to plan a teacher externship. Thank you for participating in the externship program.

Preferred start date:	Teacher hours (e.g., X:XX to X:XX, # days per week):
Number of weeks:	School:
School contact name, phone, and email:	
Work-based learning (WBL) coordinator name, phone, and email:	

Employer expectations:	Check:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meet or speak with the WBL coordinator to discuss the nature of the work you anticipate for the teacher extern, any particular skills or strengths you would seek in a candidate, and other features of the externship. The initial conversation should take 15-20 minutes and will likely be followed by other communications with the WBL coordinator as planning progresses. 2. Work with the WBL coordinator to outline a work and learning plan with specific goals and deliverables for the teacher extern. This plan would be finalized in collaboration with the teacher who is selected to work with your organization. Teacher externs should not fill positions that otherwise would be available to part- or full-time workers. 3. Discuss payment or contribution to the extern stipend (if expected of employer). 4. Advise the WBL coordinator of any safety or security precautions that are necessary. 5. Identify the employee who will supervise the extern’s day-to-day work so that he/she can be well-informed about the program. 6. Interview externship candidates who will have been pre-screened and referred by school staff. College representatives may participate in screening and referral if a teacher is seeking credit for the externship. 7. Make the final selection of the extern for your organization. 8. Finalize the work and learning plan with the teacher you have selected. (In addition to the work on which you agree, the teacher will be expected to produce lesson plans that integrate real-world examples with academic content.) 9. Someone from the district, school, or college will be on call during the externship to provide any needed logistical support or to help resolve any problems that arise. 10. You or one of your employees may be invited to speak at a meeting in which externs discuss careers in your industry and the skills and knowledge students need to prepare for them. 11. Following the externship, you will be asked to complete a brief evaluation of the teacher’s performance and your assessment of the experience. 	

Teacher Externship Employer Evaluation

Thank you for hosting a teacher extern in your organization. Your feedback is valuable to ensuring high-quality experiences for future teacher externs and their host employers. Please take a few minutes to complete this form and return to (who and where) at your earliest convenience.

Name:	Phone number:
Title:	Email:
Organization:	Teacher extern name:
Dates of externship:	

Please evaluate the teacher in each of the following areas.

COMMUNICATION				
Communicated well with colleagues	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Applicable
Asked good questions	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Applicable
Demonstrated interest in learning about the industry	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Applicable
TEACHER EVALUATION				
Adhered to work schedule	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Applicable
Completed assigned projects or tasks	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Applicable
Worked well with other employees	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Applicable
Quality and value of teacher's work	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Applicable
OVERALL EVALUATION				
Externship experience	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Applicable

Would you be willing to host another teacher in the future? YES NO

Please use the rest of this page for comments or suggestions for enhancing our externship program.

Teacher Externship Application Form

Teacher externships are opportunities to work with a local employer for an extended period of time to gain hands-on exposure to the careers for which you are helping to prepare your students. Externships run from ## to ## weeks in the summer. In addition to time in the workplace, teachers meet periodically to reflect, share experiences, and talk about how to integrate real-world examples into their lesson plans.

If you would like to apply for an externship, please complete this application and return it with your resume to (name and contact information) by (date). There will be a two-stage selection process: finalists will be selected by (whom); the host employer will interview candidates and make the final selection.

Name:	
School:	
Subject:	Grade level:
Industry(ies) in which you are interested in working:	
Employer(s) for which you are interested in working:	
Specific occupation, department, or function in which you are interested:	
Course content that you wish to enrich as a result of the externship:	
Please explain why you are interested in a teacher externship and how you will use the experience to benefit your students:	
Phone:	Email:
Signature:	

Externship Teacher Evaluation

Thank you for participating in the externship program. Your feedback is important to continue providing enriching WBL opportunities to teachers.

Name:	School:
Name of host:	Host email:
Host organization:	Host phone number:
Dates of externship:	

Please evaluate the experience in each of the following areas.

EMPLOYER HOST				
Good two-way communication	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Applicable
Treated me with respect	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Applicable
Was prepared for my externship	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Applicable
EXTERNSHIP WORK				
Work was challenging	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Applicable
I strengthened my ability to work in teams	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Applicable
Work was valuable for employer	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Applicable
I gained knowledge of this industry	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Applicable
OVERALL EVALUATION				
I will be better able to prepare my students for WBL	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Applicable
I am proud of my externship accomplishments	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Applicable
I will incorporate my learning into classroom instruction	Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Below Expectations	Not Applicable

Would you recommend other teachers extern with this organization? Circle one and explain. YES NO

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How do you plan to use what you learned to enrich your teaching?

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What suggestions do you have for strengthening the teacher externship program?

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