

Dublin City Schools' Young Professionals' Academy (YPA) is a program committed to providing work-based learning opportunities for high school juniors and seniors. Work-based learning (WBL) is a coordinated sequence of experiences designed to provide students with real-world learning through partnerships with local business and industry professionals. These learning activities help students explore careers and choose an appropriate career path. Research has shown that WBL helps business by providing positive promotion for your company in the community, long-term workforce development, and exceptional employee productivity. Businesses also have discovered, recruited, and eventually hired employees through WBL internships.

Students participating in our program have applied, had their grades and attendance records reviewed, and came with several recommendations prior to their acceptance. These highly motivated and capable young men and women need internship mentors in order to help continue to develop their future-ready-skills through work-based learning opportunities.

While enrolled in YPA, students are instructed in career research and preparation, communication skills, problem solving, teamwork, and the soft skills many companies are seeking in their employees. Students develop cover letters, resumes, and other resources to market themselves and their skills. Students are placed at worksites and businesses based upon their career interests and aptitudes. Throughout this educational partnership, students experience a plethora of job activities in various departments, often interacting with several different employees or working solely with one individual. Each student is required to complete research, observations, interviews, and participate in projects and tasks while at each internship in coordination with their mentor(s) needs and schedules. Our work-based learning experiences involve the following:

- Six-week educational mentorship experiences in either in the fall or the spring semesters of the school year
- Student will present mentor(s) with an agency mentorship agreement, emergency forms, resumes, and informational forms prior to starting their educational partnership
- Student and mentor(s) discuss learning goals and expectations during initial interviews/meetings
- Mentor(s) and students develop a schedule of three to four time periods per week for a minimum of five hours per week for a total of 30 to 35 hours per six-week internship. There is flexibility as the quality of the partnership is more important than just achieving a total number of hours
- Mentors are asked to sign off on student time logs each week
- Mentors share individual and company expectations and opportunities with the student throughout the internship
- Mentors are asked to perform or coordinate a short, mock interview for the student during the internship
- Our YPA mentorships are educational learning opportunities; therefore, students are not considered employees in respect to worker's compensation or other fair labor laws as they are earning academic credits during this work-based learning experience