



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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ZACHARY PARKER

Ward 5 Councilmember
Chair, Committee on Youth Affairs

COMMITTEE MEMBER

Health
Human Services
Transportation and the Environment

October 4, 2025

Nyasha Smith, Secretary
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Secretary Smith,

Today I am introducing the Work-Based Learning Amendment Act of 2025. This bill directs the Deputy Mayor for Education to submit a plan to require work-based learning to be a part of graduation requirements by 2035. This legislation is co-introduced by Councilmembers Anita Bonds and Janeese Lewis-George.

I have been heartened to hear of the work that both the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME) and Office of the State Superintendent for Education (OSSE) have done related to work-based learning (WBL) and career and technical education (CTE). Through my engagement with their offices, I have seen their work to establish clear frameworks and expand high-quality programs of study in both school-based and dual-enrollment programs. They have also organized employers to expand internship and externship offerings, aligned data streams across agencies to match programming with labor market needs, and established clear and actionable goals. I intend to fight for more funding to scale the successes we've seen.

I've also noted the need for more clarity about what work-based learning programs and experiences should count for school credit, how to improve financial incentives for getting employer participation, and the many challenges of coordination across agencies that might be holding back our ability to scale this work. I believe that our students need to be set up for success in the job market and that everyone should have some kind of work-based learning experience before they graduate.

To that end, I'm introducing this bill to require the DME make a plan for requiring that work-based learning be made a graduation requirement by 2035. This is an ambitious goal that I hope will focus our attention and resources towards aligning education with the needs of our students and the future of our economy.

I look forward to working with my Council colleagues on this proposal to deliver for all District students as we help them develop meaningful careers when they leave our school system.

Please do not hesitate to contact my Committee Director, Thomas Franco, at tfranco@dccouncil.gov or my Policy Analyst, Sam Bonar, at sbonar@dccouncil.gov with any questions or concerns.

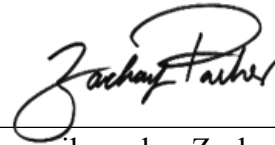
Signed,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Zachary Parker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Zachary" and last name "Parker" clearly legible.

Zachary Parker
Councilmember, Ward 5
Chair, Committee on Youth Affairs
Council of the District of Columbia

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3 Councilmember Anita Bonds



Councilmember Zachary Parker



Councilmember Janeese Lewis-George

10 A BILL

14 IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

18 To amend The Public Education Reform Amendment Act of 2007 to direct the Deputy Mayor
19 for Education to submit a plan to require work-based learning to be a part of graduation
20 requirements by 2035.

22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, that this
23 act may be cited as the “Work-based Learning Amendment Act of 2025”.

24 Sec. 2. Section 203b of The Public Education Reform Amendment Act of 2007, effective
25 June 12, 2007 (D.C. Law 17-9; D.C. Official Code 38-192.02 et seq.), is amended by adding a
26 new subsection (c) to read as follows:

27 “(c) Within 12 months after the effective date of the Work-based Learning Amendment
28 Act of 2025, the Deputy Mayor for Education shall provide a report to the Council which shall:

29 “(1) Evaluate the District's definition of work-based learning, which clearly
30 defines the set of activities and experiences that qualify as work-based learning for school credit
31 for high-school students;

32 “(2) Create a proposal for providing financial incentives to employers engaging in
33 work-based learning;

34 “(3) Create a plan to require all high-school students have at least one work-based
35 learning program of study or other direct experience as part of city-wide graduation requirements
36 by 2035; and

37 “(4) Outline any challenges that exist to coordinating work-based learning
38 opportunities across government.”.

39 Sec. 3. Fiscal impact statement.

40 The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal
41 impact statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975,
42 approved October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

43 Sec. 4. Effective date.

44 This act shall take effect after approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the
45 Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of congressional review as
46 provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December
47 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of
48 Columbia Register.