

# Unique Educational Partnership Creates Pre-Apprenticeship Program for Students

By Christine Galvin, ESC of Central Ohio Director of College and Career Success

To best prepare students for success after high school, Central Ohio school districts are deeply engaged in the work of researching and responding to the economic needs of their communities. Many districts are working to provide pathways that give students the skills they need for in-demand jobs and for a remediation-free college experience. As part of that work, several districts have created work-based learning (WBL) experiences that offer rich, engaging learning experiences to all students and have encouraged students to plan for their future careers while taking stock of what skills and resources they will need for those careers.

The [ESC of Central Ohio](#) and [Hamilton Local Schools](#) have partnered to create a welding pre-apprenticeship program with Columbus-based [Capitol City Trailers](#) that will allow pre-apprenticeship students to earn a [12-point industry credential](#). The program has three components:

1. Classroom curriculum instruction
2. A WBL experience
3. Alignment with an approved apprenticeship program

## Developing the Program As a Team

To get the pre-apprenticeship program off the ground, individuals from the ESC and Hamilton Local Schools teamed up to complete the first component—classroom instruction. The team requested input from Capitol City Trailers and also reviewed [O\\*Net](#)—a database containing hundreds of standardized and occupation-specific descriptors—to identify which welding competencies to include in the program. Additionally, the team reviewed the advanced tech courses currently offered at Hamilton to pinpoint any overlaps between the new program and existing courses. Together, the Hamilton district instructor worked with Capitol City Trailers to revise the curriculum to match the needed competencies.

Once the curriculum was finalized, the team worked closely together to develop the WBL plan that identified which competencies the students would learn during their experience at the company, while also laying out expectations for all stakeholders involved.

To complete the program development, the team reached out to [Columbus Plumbers and Pipefitters JATC](#)—an approved welding apprenticeship program—to provide pre-apprenticeship students with information on what steps they have to take to enter an approved program and learn the skills to be successful.

When all three components were in place, the ESC wrote the pre-apprenticeship plan, served as the approved sponsor and submitted the plan to the [Ohio Department of Job and Family Services](#) from where it received final approval in August 2019. The Hamilton Local Schools Pre-Apprenticeship Program is enrolling students for the 2019-20 school year.

When asked about the creation of this program in partnership with the ESC and Capitol City Trailers, Mike Morbitzer, Coordinator of Grants, Federal Programs, and Standards at Hamilton Local Schools, said:

“We have been intentional about giving students the unique learning experiences and workforce opportunities they need. Their interests, skills, and goals guide their pathway direction and we arrange curricular partnerships with local businesses that give them what they need to succeed in their chosen pathway fields. Our welding pre-apprenticeship program is not only a 12-point credential pathway to graduation, but it also gets the students way out in front of others on their career paths. Partnering with a local company that wants to hire them gives students a working vision of a successful career after high school. Their pathways become clear when they can see what the path looks like and how to get there. Our pre-apprenticeship welding program is a clear pathway to success in an in-demand field with great advancement and earning opportunities.”

**Interested  
in creating a  
program like  
this in your  
district?**

Contact Christine Galvin at  
[christine.galvin@escoco.org](mailto:christine.galvin@escoco.org).