Virtual Internships: Planning Considerations

A virtual internship is a remote work experience where the intern gains industry knowledge and builds professional skills by undergoing trainings and completing tasks and valuable work for their employer. Like in-person internships, virtual internships allow interns to develop a diverse set of skills of high value to employers including:

- Collaboration & Teamwork
- Interpersonal Communication
- Creativity & Innovation
- Critical Thinking & Problem-Solving

- Information Management
- Initiative & Self-Direction
- Professionalism & Ethics

Virtual internships rely on effective **communication** and **integrity**, which promote an intern's ability to take **initiative** and **work autonomously**.

Additionally, virtual internships have an added perk of eliminating the work commute, saving time and money. Although interns are not physically present at the job site, employers are able to engage in workflow with interns through collaborative platforms, emails, and phone calls.

When planning a virtual internship, stakeholders should consider the following:

✓ **Employers**
- What experience has the company had with facilitating remote work opportunities and engagements that could be utilized to help plan this new opportunity?
- What type of work or project of value to your company could an intern complete in a remote capacity?
- What will a schedule look like that accommodates remote work experience and skill development for the intern?
- Can the company provide the intern with a laptop and other equipment necessary for remote work?

✓ **School districts**
- Will students be allowed to participate in a virtual internship if schools are closed or operating only virtually during the summer and/or fall?
- Do students have access to laptops and internet that could be used for the internship?
- Who will be the school point of contact (e.g. internship coordinator)?
- What procedures does the school district have in place to recruit students and schedule interviews with employers?
- What protocols or procedures are in place to keep students safe in an online work environment?