



Project Based Learning School

Identity & Community Engagement Toolkit

A communications and marketing toolkit for principals, schools, families, and community stakeholders to celebrate and communicate their identity as a recognized Project Based Learning School



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Introduction

The Project Based Learning School: Identity & Community Engagement Toolkit is designed to help Idaho schools confidently share their new designation as a Project Based Learning School with families, staff, and community partners. It provides clear messaging, ready-to-use templates, and adaptable examples that align with the Idaho Workforce Development Council + STEM badge language and Future Pathways framework.

As your school strengthens its focus on high-quality project based learning, consistent communication becomes essential. This toolkit offers principal letters, FAQ language, social media posts, grade-band messaging, and visual assets that highlight how students are engaging in real world learning, building durable skills, and preparing for future college and career pathways. Each section is organized to save time, reduce drafting from scratch, and support a unified story about project based learning across your school community.

You are encouraged to customize the examples to reflect your school's unique identity, programs, and community partnerships while maintaining the core messages included here. Used together, these resources help your school celebrate the Project Based Learning School badge, deepen stakeholder understanding, and connect classroom learning to the futures your students are actively building.



Toolkit Brand Guidelines

Fonts

Title, Subtitle, Heading
Subheading, & Section Header -
Gotham

Body, Caption, & Quote -
Roboto

Content Voice

- Clear
- Student-Centered
- Future-Focused
- Professional
- Encouraging

Colors

-  deep navy - #113552
-  slate blue - #426672
-  Glacial Ice - #78AA9B
-  White - #FFFFFF

Badge Use

- Keep original colors
- Do Not Stretch or Distort
- Use on Cover, Section Openers,
and Key Callouts



Badge Language and Identity

Official Badge Definition

The Idaho Workforce Development Council + STEM Project Based Learning School badge recognizes schools that intentionally use high quality project based learning to engage students in meaningful, real world learning experiences. These schools create opportunities for students to solve authentic problems, work collaboratively, think critically, and build durable skills that prepare them for college, careers, and life. This recognition reflects a school's commitment to career connected learning and ensuring students are prepared for the future.

Reference to Badge on Webpages

We are proud to be recognized as an Idaho Workforce Development Council + STEM Project Based Learning School. This badge reflects our commitment to engaging students in real world learning experiences that build academic knowledge, durable skills, career connected learning, and future readiness.

WDC + STEM will share wrap-up content highlighting the impact of the STEM Designation Program.

WDC + STEM will create a highlight post featuring our new badge and partner schools on all social medias. Please feel free to also post on your socials and newsletters the mirror content to align with our launch of this inaugural cohort.



FAQ for Families and Community

What is Project Based Learning?

Project Based Learning, often called PBL, is a teaching approach where students learn by actively engaging in meaningful, real world questions, challenges, and problems. Through project based learning, students apply academic knowledge in authentic ways while building communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and problem solving skills.

As part of the Future Pathways model, Project Based Learning helps students connect classroom learning to career pathways, workforce skills, and future opportunities by engaging in work that mirrors real world expectations and experiences.

Has Our School Already Been Doing Project Based Learning?

Yes! Our school has already been engaged in meaningful student centered learning and authentic instructional practices that reflect many of the principles of Project Based Learning.

This recognition does not represent a completely new direction. Instead, it strengthens and deepens the important work already happening in our classrooms by intentionally expanding Project Based Learning as part of the Future Pathways framework.

This transition helps our school build on existing strengths while creating even more opportunities for students to develop academic knowledge, durable skills, career awareness, and future readiness.



Why is Our School Focusing More Intentionally on Project Based Learning?

Project Based Learning helps students connect what they are learning in the classroom to real world experiences, future careers, and authentic challenges.

As part of the Future Pathways model, this work strengthens our focus on:

- Career connected learning
- Workforce readiness
- Durable skill development
- Student engagement
- Real world application of academic learning
- Future pathways and career exploration

Through Project Based Learning, students have opportunities to apply knowledge, solve meaningful problems, collaborate with others, communicate ideas, and think critically in ways that prepare them for success in school, careers, and life.

This more intentional focus helps students understand not only what they are learning, but why it matters and how it connects to their future.



Does Project Based Learning Replace Academic Standards?

No. Students continue to learn all grade level academic standards and core content.

Project Based Learning does not replace academic rigor. Instead, it strengthens learning by helping students engage with academic standards in deeper, more meaningful, and more applied ways.

Through PBL, students use reading, writing, math, science, research, communication, and critical thinking in authentic projects that require them to apply their learning in real world contexts.

This helps students build both strong academic knowledge and the durable skills needed for college, careers, and future success.



How Does Project Based Learning Prepare Students for School and Careers?

Project Based Learning helps students strengthen academic learning because they are applying standards in deeper and more meaningful contexts. Instead of only learning content in isolation, students use reading, writing, math, science, research, and problem solving in authentic projects.

Through PBL, students develop:

- Deeper understanding of academic concepts
- Increased student engagement and motivation
- Better critical thinking and retention
- Stronger communication and presentation skills
- Greater ownership of learning
- Opportunities for reflection and growth

PBL helps students understand not just what they are learning, but why it matters.

How PBL Prepares Students for Careers

The Idaho Workforce Development Council's Future Pathways model reinforces a focus on workforce outcomes by strengthening Project Based Learning as a career connected learning model with maintained rigor and updated metrics.



Project Based Learning helps students build the same durable skills needed in the workforce, including:

- Communication
- Collaboration
- Problem solving
- Leadership
- Critical thinking
- Creativity
- Adaptability
- Professionalism
- Project management
- Initiative
- Digital fluency
- Reflection and continuous improvement

These skills matter across every career field and industry.

Career Connected Learning Through PBL

Project Based Learning creates opportunities for students to experience learning in ways that reflect real world workforce expectations. Students learn to:



- Solve authentic problems
- Work in teams with shared responsibility
- Meet deadlines and manage projects
- Present ideas to real audiences
- Receive feedback and improve their work
- Connect classroom learning to future careers
- Understand how academic skills apply in the workplace

This helps students begin to see themselves as future professionals, innovators, leaders, and problem solvers!



12 Durable Skills

1. Communication

Expressing ideas clearly and effectively.

2. Collaboration

Working productively with others.

3. Critical Thinking

Analyzing information thoughtfully.

4. Problem Solving

Finding solutions to challenges.

5. Adaptability

Adjusting to change and new situations

6. Creativity

Generating new ideas and approaches.

7. Initiative

Taking responsibility and action.

8. Leadership

Guiding and influencing others positively.

9. Professionalism

Demonstrating responsibility and work ethic.

10. Resilience

Learning from setbacks and persevering.

11. Empathy

Understanding others and building relationships

12. Digital Fluency

Using Technology effectively and responsibly.





Templates for Letters and Messages

Letter from Principal to Parents and Families

Dear Families,

Our school is proud to be recognized as an Idaho Workforce Development Council + STEM Project Based Learning School.

This recognition reflects the meaningful work already happening in our classrooms and strengthens our commitment to helping students learn through engaging, real world experiences that build academic knowledge, critical thinking, collaboration, and future ready skills.

Project Based Learning allows students to explore authentic questions, solve meaningful problems, and apply what they are learning in ways that connect school to life beyond the classroom.

As a Project Based Learning School, our students will continue building the durable skills that matter for success in college, careers, and life, including communication, teamwork, creativity, leadership, and problem solving.

This recognition also reinforces our commitment to career connected learning by helping students understand how classroom learning connects to future opportunities.

We are excited to continue this work and grateful for your partnership as we prepare students for the future.

Sincerely,



Letter from Principal to Community and Stakeholders

Dear Community Partners,

Our school is proud to be recognized as an Idaho Workforce Development Council + STEM Project Based Learning School.

This recognition highlights our commitment to providing students with meaningful learning experiences that connect academics to real world challenges, career pathways, and workforce readiness.

Project Based Learning helps students build durable skills such as communication, collaboration, leadership, creativity, and problem solving while engaging in authentic learning experiences.

As we strengthen this work, partnerships with business, industry, and community organizations become even more important in helping students understand how learning connects to future careers and community impact.

Thank you for partnering with us as we prepare students for the future.

Sincerely,



Social Media Content Bank

Adapt these sample posts for your school's channels. They are arranged in the recommended posting order.

Social Media Post Templates

Theme	Sample Caption
Badge Announcement	We are proud to be recognized as an Idaho Workforce Development Council + STEM Project Based Learning School. This recognition reflects our commitment to real world learning, career connected experiences, and preparing students for the future.
Student Skills	Project Based Learning helps students build communication, teamwork, creativity, leadership, and problem solving skills that matter in school, careers, and life.
Career Connected Learning	Learning should connect to life beyond the classroom. Project Based Learning helps students explore careers, solve authentic problems, and build future ready skills.
Community Partnerships	Strong schools and strong communities work together. Project Based Learning helps students connect classroom learning to community impact and career pathways.
Student Spotlight	Today we celebrate our students for showing creativity, collaboration, leadership, and problem solving through Project Based Learning.



Social Media Post Templates Continued

Theme	Sample Caption
Learning by Doing	At our school, students learn by doing. Through Project Based Learning, students explore, create, ask questions, solve problems, and build confidence while learning important academic skills.
Curiosity and Early Futures	We are proud to be a Project Based Learning School where students learn through curiosity, creativity, teamwork, and real world exploration. Preparing young learners for bright futures starts now.
Exploration and Durable Skills	The school day is a critical time for exploration, collaboration, and discovery. Project Based Learning helps students connect learning to real world challenges while building durable skills and exploring future possibilities.
Beyond Content to Careers	At our school, students do more than learn content. They solve problems, work together, explore careers, and build future ready skills through Project Based Learning.
College, Career, and Life Readiness	Project Based Learning prepares students for college, careers, and life by connecting classroom learning to authentic challenges, workforce skills, leadership opportunities, and future pathways.
Future-Ready, Career-Connected School	Real world learning. Future ready students. Career connected opportunities. We are proud to be a Project Based Learning School preparing students for what comes next.



Bonus Materials & Visuals

Signature Language

Proud Project Based Learning School | Idaho Workforce Development Council + STEM

Poster Taglines

Learning by Doing Real World Learning for Future Ready Students Building Skills for Life Career Connected Learning Starts Here Preparing Students for the Future

National Center on Education and the Economy Materials

