One of the primary reasons for a lack of work-based learning opportunities in many communities is a breakdown of communication between employers and educators. Factors such as conflicting schedules, complex workloads, and misunderstanding of roles make it difficult to organize, develop, and implement successful learning experiences for students.

To address this need, the Iowa Department of Education, in collaboration with Iowa’s 15 community colleges, created the Iowa Work-Based Learning Intermediary Network. Dedicated and trained professionals are available throughout the state to assist employers, educators, and other community support partners interested in building new relationships and improving or expanding current work-based learning programs. Rather than attempting to build these complex initiatives from scratch, an Intermediary can be a great starting point to provide a range of services and experience.

Additional public and private community partners, such as Iowa’s Area Education Agencies, the Iowa Governor’s STEM Advisory Council, a local chamber of commerce, or a regional industry sector partnership can also assist in building connections.