



Work-Based Learning Partnership: Building Tomorrow Today in Education

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Ware Disposal is an exclusive provider of refuse and recycling services in the Local Central District of the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). Ware Disposal is currently providing a work-based learning (WBL) partnership program in sustainability organized and directed by Semco.

WBL is an instructional strategy that connects classroom learning to the workplace. It involves schools and employers working together to provide students with structured learning experiences that help them develop skills that can be applied in the workplace and postsecondary education. Ware Disposal is sponsoring a WBL strategy based on limited classroom instruction in the senior grade (12th) and focused on internships in sustainability industries and institutions. This program has been developed by Semco based on its founding principal's experience in WBL programs at Santa Monica College and elsewhere.

At LAUSD, the State of California has mandated (SB 1383) the recycling of organic wastes (e.g., food scraps & wastepaper) instead of landfilling. Organics in landfills amount to 17 million tons per year in California and degrade to methane -- a short-lived but extremely potent climate pollutant. By law, LAUSD must separate organics from trash and recycle these materials to help address extreme climate change. Students must be given instruction about proper management of organics, i.e., source separation.

This law (SB 1383) may be burdensome, but it can also represent an opportunity. Sustainability is rapidly becoming one of the most significant industries for the 21st century. The WBL sustainability program will help link students with industries and institutions through a unique internship program. The goal is to help students experience potential careers, jobs, and entrepreneurial opportunities in sustainability industries and government.

Beginning this Fall 2024, Ware Disposal and Semco will organize guest presentations early in each of the Fall and Spring semesters. Participating schools in Ware Disposal's service area will learn about internship opportunities from experts in industry and government; along with limited instructional content about organics recycling. Semco will recruit these experts from industries and institutions who can offer paid internship opportunities to 12th grade students. Semco will coordinate among the participating schools and experts for follow up with recruitment of interns via intern sign up lists submitted by teachers. Semco will monitor the interns' progress with the businesses and institutions selected.

Fostering business and educational institution collaboration to provide youth opportunities in sustainable industries and institutions for jobs, careers and local business ownership is a laudable goal and can help transform student lives through experiential education. Stay connected with Semco this Fall to find out more at <https://sustainable-env.com>.



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