

Employers and Coaches

Employers play a critical role in collaborating on new public-private approaches to closing the skills gap. Inspire Connections gives the west central Wisconsin region a unique opportunity to engage our future workforce by strengthening the relationship between our business and education communities. But, we need your help to ensure the initiative is successful. Inspire Connections can help you improve your company's local talent pipeline by connecting your company with students (6th grade through college), their parents and educators to inform them about your company and industry needs as well as work-based learning opportunities that you may offer.

Enroll today to create a free profile that will reach your future talent!

[Click Here](#) to:

- Register your company or organization
- Join a company or organization that has already registered
- Register independently (apart from a company) as a career coach

Inspire Connections brings together employers, online career coaches, community organizations and schools with a shared goal of helping students and companies reach their goals and improving the workforce pipeline in Barron, Chippewa, Clark, Dunn, Eau Claire, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Rusk and St. Croix Counties. Employers are absolutely vital to developing a robust talent pipeline in this region through participation in and the development of work-based learning programs, career mentorship and partnerships with schools. Inspire Connections provides a venue and a framework for employer relationships with secondary and post-secondary educational institutions across the region.

Companies:

- Increase your business' visibility and highlight your community involvement
- Promote careers that are available in the region and help students realize that there are many opportunities in your community
- Nurture your future workforce by connecting with them early in their career development
- Bridge the skills gap of students coming out of high school by communicating what the real world needs
- Help build Wisconsin into a workforce-strong and economically vibrant state
- Positively affect and directly address the region's drop-out, graduation and unemployment rates

Online Career Coaches:

- Bridge the skills gap by answering student questions about careers
- Help the next generation determine the right career and academic pathway for their future
- Spend an hour or less per month – a small time commitment
- Promote your career field to future talent
- Give back to your community from your computer or smartphone – simply connect from your job site or desk!
- Participation is free and is easily tailored to your level of involvement and schedule.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, INCLUDING HELPFUL STEP-BY-STEP TECHNICAL SUPPORT DOCUMENTS, PLEASE SEE THE BELOW RESOURCES:

- [Inspire Connections: Careers Quick Start Guide \(Key Features\)](#)
- [Inspire Connections: Career Coach Guide](#)
- [Inspire Connections: Employer Involvement](#)
- [Inspire Connections: Employer \(Manage My Account\)](#)

Employer and Coach Support

1. **Please reference the Employer/Online Career Coach section.**

Students

Nearly all west central Wisconsin middle and high schools now have access to the Inspire Connections features. This will be helpful to you as a student as you create your individualized learning plan in your Career Cruising account assigned at your school. Features include:

- Employer profiles that describe local companies that hire people for the careers you are interested in
- Online career coaches who will answer your career-related questions
- Experiential Learning Activities (ELAs) – find and request local ELAs offered by local employers and community organizations. ELAs like job-shadowing and internships are an important step to take in understanding where you'd like to go in your career – and what steps you need to take with your education

Have you ever wondered:

- What is it like working at a particular job?
- What do I need to do to get into a career I like?
- What classes do I need to take?

Have you ever wanted to:

- Learn more about a career?
- Get help/guidance in finding a career that you're interested in?
- Find a summer job with an employer that you'd like to work for?
- Start planning for your future?

If you've ever asked yourself any of these questions or want to get help in your career planning, then Inspire Connections can help:

- Do you have access to [CareerCruising.com](http://www.careercruising.com)? **To access your account, click HERE.** If you don't have access – please contact your school counselor or principal
- Don't know where to start after logging in? **Download this Student Quick-Start Guide.**

Student Support

1. **How do I access Inspire Connections?** You will need a password. To access Inspire Connections go to www.careercruising.com and enter your portfolio username and password. If you don't have a password, please contact your teacher/counselor.
2. **I don't remember my password – help!** If you've included your email address with your portfolio, go to www.careercruising.com and select the Forgot Password link (found at the top right of the page). Select Personal Portfolio Username and Password on the pop up window and enter your email address and the system will send you your access information. If you didn't include your email address or you don't remember your portfolio username and password, please contact your teacher/counselor.
3. **I've logged into Inspire Connections – now what?** Fantastic! You can now search for more information on any career, learn more about what colleges/universities have to offer etc. **If you don't know where do start just follow this Quick Start Guide.** (Adobe Acrobat required)

Educators

Inspire Connections offers tools for educators to engage students in thinking about their careers, find relevance in what they are learning in the classroom and increase students' career readiness.

This talent-development platform helps students and career-seekers achieve their future career goals by bridging the gap between school and the work world. Inspire Connections provides a central hub in which area students and educators can actively interact with area employers and career coaches with the goal of:

- Helping students find relevance in what they are learning in the classroom
- Engaging students early in thinking about their careers
- Making a positive impact on our region's career readiness

How does the program work?

Inspire Connections is a whole-community approach to career readiness that enhances the academic and career planning tools available to school districts utilizing Career Cruising for their ACP platform. The system provides a customized information sharing and resource gathering environment where educators and their students can easily:

- Learn about area companies that offer jobs and careers in their area of interest
- Participate in career discussions with an online mentor/career coach from that company
- Further interact with that company by participating in other real-world experiences, such as job-shadowing, internships, company tours, and summer employment

How can educators participate?

Access the Inspire Connections features and lesson plans through your Career Cruising CAMS account. Help students learn about local businesses in the career clusters of they are interested in, connect with work-based learning opportunities and get advice from local online career coach mentors. Make sure your school is licensed with Career Cruising. If you would like your school to participate in Inspire Connections, please contact your CESA.

Educator Support

1. **How do I login to my account? How do I retrieve my password?** To login to your account go to www.careercruising.com/school. If you have forgotten/misplaced your password, you can retrieve your password by going here.
2. **How can I get more training on CareerCruising.com/Inspire Connections?** To sign up for free general training on CareerCruising.com, go to <http://public.careercruising.com/ca/en/training/webinars/> and register for a webinar that you are interested in. For specific Inspire Connections training, please contact us at _____
3. **Where can I find class activities using CareerCruising.com/Inspire Connections?** To find the Career Cruising/Inspire Connections class activities, [login to your account](#) and go to the Helpful Documents section and go to the Classroom Activities and Research Projects section.
4. **How do I view what students/users are posting on the discussion boards?** [Login to your account](#) and go to the Portfolio Reports section and go to the Inspire Connections Section at the bottom of the page. There is a report called Message Board Posts by Student that will list all the posts for each student. Note: You can filter the report by clicking the Custom button under the Customize This Report section of the page.
5. **Where can I find any flagged/inappropriate discussion board posts?** Login to your www.careercruising.com/school account and go to the Inspire Connections section and go to the Flagged Message Board Posts Sub-section (second from the bottom of the list).
6. **I've received a Work-based Learning (WLA) Request – Now what?** [Login to your account](#) and go to the Inspire Connections section and go to the Manage WLE Requests Sub-section (4th from the top of the list). You will then be shown a list of requests – any requests with the red exclamation mark (!) requires your attention. Please reference the CAMS Quick Start Guide for Work-based Learning Activities.
7. **How do I manage WLA requests?** [Login to your account](#) and go to the Inspire Connections section and go to the Manage WLA Requests Sub-section (4th from the top of the list). You will then be shown a list of requests – any requests with the red exclamation mark (!) requires your attention. Please reference the CAMS Quick Start Guide for Work-based Learning Activities.

Parents

Inspire Connections helps you understand your child's career goals and the available work-based learning opportunities that get them connected with local employers — bridging the gap between classwork and the work world. Inspire Connections creates a way for students and job-seekers to actively interact with area employers and career coaches. By encouraging your child take advantage of the tools, you can help them discover their career path and attain their career goals.

How does the program work?

Inspire Connections is a web-based program which connects a student's career interests with real companies and real-life professionals in that career area. The system, which is powered by a licensed product called Career Cruising, provides a customized information sharing and resource gathering environment where students/job-seekers can:

- Learn about area companies that offer jobs and careers in their area of interest
- Participate in career discussions with an online mentor/career coach from that company
- Further interact with that company by participating in other Work-based Learning Activities, such as job-shadowing, internships, company tours, and summer employment

How can a parent participate?

- Help your child use the tools/resources available (sign up for a student/parent account by contacting your school office).
- Encourage your employer to participate in Inspire Connections (have your employer **follow the instructions on the Employers page**).
- Sign up to be an online mentor/career coach in a particular field of study. Do you have knowledge in a particular career field? Would you like to share your experience with interested students and job seekers? Contact us today at **info@inspireconnections.com**

(Attention: All registrants are subject to a nation-wide criminal and sex offender background check before your account is activated. For more information on the terms, please click [User-Terms-and-Conditions](#))

Parent Support

1. **I'd like to help my child use Inspire Connections. Where do I begin?** You can request an activation code from your child's school or from your child. From there, you can log-in to **<https://www.careercruising.com/parent/default.aspx>**. Please reference the following Student Quick-start Guide. If you have trouble accessing your child's account, please go to the Student Support section.
2. **I've registered as a volunteer. Now what? Please reference the Employer/Online Career Coach section.**