



CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Employers/Students/Teachers
A Partnership That Works



What is Co-operative Education?

Co-operative education is a program that integrates classroom theory with practical experience in the workplace. The program is based on a partnership between the school and business/industry and involves the participation of students, teachers, employers, and, in most cases, employee supervisors.

Students normally undertake either a half day or a full day co-operative education program. They divide their time between school and the workplace, spending at least half the day with the employer. School credits are awarded for successful on-the-job experience after joint evaluation by the employer and the teacher. Interested students should contact their guidance office or co-operative education teacher to apply. Students must meet certain criteria and must be recommended for this program.

Teachers involved in co-operative education are knowledgeable in the subject areas in which students are receiving credits and in the field of co-operative education. They are first of all responsible for selecting students for the program; thereafter, they work with employers to develop a Personal Placement Learning Plan for each student. Teachers also visit work stations on a regular basis to monitor students' progress and evaluate their performance.

Co-operative education is designed to promote closer associations between students and working adults who are willing to share their knowledge. Experienced employers can reinforce schools by helping students to make informed decisions about their future education and careers. Employers can help students gain confidence in making the transition from school to the world of work, apprenticeships, or post secondary education.

Why Get Involved in Co-operative Education?

All employers have a direct interest in the development of a skilled and responsive work force in their community. Co-operative education can help to achieve this goal by providing students with training and work experience before they start work on a full-time basis.

One of the major functions of secondary schools is the preparation of students for the challenges of the future. Our education system is judged to a large extent on its ability to equip students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes they will need to pursue worthwhile careers. However, the schools on their own cannot provide the practical hands-on experience that is so important if students are to make a smooth transition from school to the workplace.

Therefore, there is a need for a strong, continuing partnership between schools and employers. It is only through the commitment of willing employers and supervisors that students can gain the crucial knowledge and experience they need to make sound educational and career decisions. Our employers are invaluable in helping our students toward a real appreciation of the importance of work place skills, and the development of a positive attitude toward themselves and their future careers.

Through co-operative education thousands of organizations, large and small, currently share with the school system the responsibility of educating and training the work force of tomorrow.

Why not join the team?

How Do You Participate?

Preparation and Selection: As an interested employer, you can contact your local secondary school or the Rainbow District School Board Co-operative Education office at 688-0888 for further details. A co-operative education teacher will explain the program and assess the potential for student learning at your work site. If a suitable student is available, an interview will be arranged. Although the teacher makes the initial selection of students, the final decision rests with the employer.

Supervision of Work: Students are assigned to a supervisor who is responsible for their on-the-job training. The type of work they do is determined by the teacher and the employer/supervisor and must relate to the students' areas of study. Students should be given a variety of duties and responsibilities, and these should be outlined on the Personal Placement Learning Plan designed for each individual student.

Assessment and Evaluation:

The employer/supervisor provides ongoing assessment of the student's work and assists the teacher in making regular performance appraisals at the work site. The teacher is responsible for the overall evaluation of the student and the assignment of marks.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Insurance: Students are encouraged to take out insurance for general accidents and personal liability with their school board. In addition, students are covered by WSIB through the Ministry of Education.

Safety: Safety instruction is the joint responsibility of the school and the employer who must provide a safe working environment with industrial safety procedures in place.

Work Schedules: Individual student work schedules may vary, and will be determined by the teacher in consultation with the employer.

Remuneration: Students normally do not receive a salary or wages during the hours designated by the Work Education Agreement*, as this is an education program in which students earn credits towards their Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

*This agreement outlines all pertinent details relating to the co-operative education placement including the nature and duration of the training program, hours of work, and ensures that students are covered by Workplace Safety and Insurance Board where applicable.

What Types of Students Are Involved?

Secondary school students studying at all levels of difficulty are eligible to participate in co-operative education. The maturity of students is a significant factor in determining their suitability for the program. Students often select co-operative education in order to explore career possibilities. Some may be planning to join the work force in the near future. Others may intend to continue in secondary school and/or attend community college or university. Others may choose the *Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program*. OYAP offers senior high school students the opportunity to train as registered apprentices while completing the requirements for a secondary school diploma.

How Are Students Prepared for Placement?

Students are interviewed and counseled by school staff before being accepted into the cooperative education program. They must then attend pre-employment orientation classes which deal with skills identification, career awareness, health and safety, decision making, and job-readiness skills. This pre-employment orientation usually takes place in the school and may involve members of the business community and labour organizations. Students are required to prepare a resume and attend an interview with the employer prior to placement.

Where Can Students Work?

Almost any type of business or community organization can provide work experience for students through co-operative education. Students may be placed in a variety of occupational training positions within such career fields as:

Arts & Culture
Automotive Trades
Banking & Financial Services
Clerical & Office Administration
Computer Science/ Electronics
Construction Trades
Engineering & Natural Sciences
Fashion design & Merchandising
Food & Hospitality
Forestry & Mining
Health & Medicine
Hairdressing
Manufacturing
Retail Business
Sales & Marketing
Social Services
Sports & Recreation
Teaching & Child Care
Veterinary Science & Animal Care

What Are the Benefits of Co-operative Education?
Co-operative Education benefits employers and the local community as well as the students themselves.

Employers benefit because co-operative education:

- develops a work force of young people who have employment skills and on-the-job experience
- helps to identify potential future employees
- encourages students to have a positive attitude towards productivity in the workplace
- enables employers to participate directly in the education of students and to keep educators informed of their requirements with respect to future employees
- develops supervisory skills in the employees

The *community benefits* because co-operative education:

- promotes awareness of job opportunities within the community
- can reduce the level of youth unemployment
- provides additional resources for the education system
- develops greater understanding between students and employers in the community
- develops student awareness of and concern for community values and interests

Students benefit because co-operative education enables them to:

- gain valuable work experience
- strengthen employment skills
- develop an understanding of employee expectations
- make more effective educational and career decisions
- develop maturity and self-confidence

Co-operative Education A Partnership That Works

The school staff:

- plans the program
- selects students for the program
- prepares students for placement with an employer
- organizes and administers the program
- provides safety instruction and insurance coverage
- assists in transporting students to and from the workplace
- monitors the training and evaluates the performance of students

The employer:

- provides the working environment and appropriate training
- discusses student training and develops work schedules with the teacher
- shares expertise with the student
- directs and guides student learning through on-site supervision
- assesses student progress jointly with the teacher

ARE YOU INTERESTED?

To find out more or to get involved contact the school nearest you:

Chelmsford Valley District Composite School
Paolo Salvador, Co-op Teacher
705-855-4594

Confederation Secondary School
Earl Cote, Coop Teacher
Remi Levasseur, Coop Teacher
705-897-4985

Espanola High
Dean Riggs, Coop Teacher
705-869-1590

Lasalle Secondary School
Lisette Bernier, Co-op Teacher
Rebecca Gauthier, Co-op Teacher
Linda Urisk, Coop Teacher
705-566-2280

Lively Secondary School
Sean Gray, Coop Teacher
705-692-3671

Lo-Ellen Park Secondary School
Jeff Bursey, Coop Teacher
705-522-2320

Lockerby Composite School
John Walton, Coop Teacher
705-522-1750

Manitoulin Secondary School
Sue Van Horn, Coop Teacher
705-377-5321

Sudbury Secondary School
Rona Knight, Coop Teacher
705-674-7551

Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program
Sharon Orlak
705-688-0888