



Career Related Education Work-Based Learning Program

STUDENT HANDBOOK



**MERIWETHER
COUNTY SCHOOLS**

The Meriwether School District is committed to empowering students to aim high, achieve, graduate, and succeed.



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Purpose

Congratulations! You have been selected to participate in the Career Related Education Work-Based Learning Program. It is the beginning of an exciting and rewarding career pathway.

Through the Work-Based Learning Program, classroom learning is combined with work experience. Along the way you will be expected to meet certain standards. Knowing what is expected of you at school and during your work site experience will help you to succeed, so please take the time to read the following pages carefully.

With the honor of being a part of this program comes the responsibility involving career commitment and continued effort on your part. The fact that you have been selected for this program shows that you are willing to strive for success and build a foundation for your future career.

Best wishes as you begin this new venture. Meriwether County wishes you success and pledges their support in this endeavor.

Introduction

The Meriwether County Career Related Education Work-Based Learning Program is an educational option that prepares high school students for the world of work through a combination of academic and workplace learning. It is based on the belief that our youth must be better prepared for the future if they are to be successful in a competitive, global economy.

During the 8th, 9th, and 10th grades, students should begin exploring their career interests. In the 9th and 10th grades, a student should begin taking courses in the academic and technical areas that help lay the foundation for their future career. By the 11th and 12th grades, students have the opportunity to obtain can work experience through the Career Related Education Work-Based Learning Program. Not only would a student continue to take course-work related to his/her career interest, but also begin paid, on-the-job training through a structured workplace learning program or a non-paid internship experience.

Employers aid the apprentice's education by assessing performance, creating relevant curriculum, and developing occupational skill standards specific to business and industry.

The Work-Based Learning Program also provides a direct link to higher education, with students attending a technical institute or college after the high school component of the program.

Student Portfolio

A portfolio is required for all students enrolled in a Career Related Education Work-Based Learning program. This portfolio is also a way for you to organize your assignments and showcase your best work; it can be used when applying for post secondary schools, financial aid, and jobs.

The portfolio will be graded each progress report period. All late work will have penalties. Failure to complete the portfolio assignments may result in credit not being awarded for the work-based learning placement.

What are the benefits of a portfolio? The use of portfolios enables students to:

- Discover, document, and develop their employability skills;
- Reinforce integration of academic skills, course-specific skills, and employability skills;
- Reflect on their work and goal setting
- Showcase their best work
- Establish and strengthen their personal integrity
- Become a self-directed, life-long learner; and
- Document achievements in a professional manner.

The portfolio is a “work in progress” and will chronicle the student progress toward their career goal. The portfolio will include:

- Course Syllabus
- Program Documentation
- General Program Information
- Monthly Documentation & Assignments
- Semester Final

Benefits of School-to-Career Programs

Effective work-based learning programs provide a wide range of specific benefits to students, employers, educational institutions, and the community.

A work-based learning program can benefit participating students by:

- Providing opportunities to apply academic proficiencies.
- Establishing a clear connection between education and work.
- Increasing motivation and retention by showing the relevance of academic and occupational instruction.
- Providing opportunities to explore possible careers and enhancing skill development.
- Improving post-graduation job prospects and establishing future employment contacts.
- Developing workplace responsibility and positive work habits and attitudes.
- Providing opportunities for leadership development.
- Providing opportunities to develop relationships with adults outside of education.
- Encouraging completion of secondary education and enrollment in post-secondary education.
- Helping develop an understanding of the workplace.

A work-based learning program can benefit participating employers by:

- Providing an opportunity to prepare future employees.
- Offering a source of skilled and motivated future employees.
- Reducing the cost of recruitment and training.
- Improving employee retention.
- Offering opportunities to provide community services.
- Encouraging involvement in the curriculum development process.
- Increasing employer visibility in education.
- Communicating required job-specific proficiencies to educational personnel.

Work-based learning programs can benefit local educational institutions by:

- Keeping academic and occupational curricula up-to-date through communication with business and industry.
- Providing access to the latest equipment and technology.
- Enhancing education's ability to meet the needs of diverse student populations.
- Making education more relevant and valuable to students.
- Increasing student retention.
- Augmenting interaction between education and the business community.
- Promoting faculty interaction with the business community.
- Facilitating communication regarding actual academic and occupational proficiencies required by business and industry.

Work-based learning programs can benefit the local community by:

- Providing an informed, competent, and productive future workplace.
- Ensuring cooperation and understanding between education, business, and the community.
- Enhancing awareness of local employment opportunities.
- Building the foundation for a more productive local economy.

Standards and Guidelines for Work-Based Learning Programs in Georgia
Georgia Department of Education

Meriwether County Career Related Education Work-Based Learning Programs

The Meriwether County WBL programs provide opportunities for work experience that allow students to explore a particular career area. These experiences allow the student to:

- Gain real-world experiences which connects to their class work
- Be provided with opportunities for leadership development
- Be provided with opportunities to develop relationships with adults outside of education
- Enhance skill development
- Establish a clear connection between education and work
- Develop workplace responsibility, positive work habits and attitudes
- Earn credit in a chosen pathway of study

Students may be enrolled in an Internship or the Youth Apprenticeship Program.

Internships: An internship provides a student with the opportunity to study an occupational program directly related to his or her career interest and to participate in a workplace setting by performing duties related to the occupational studies. This WBL experience may be paid or unpaid.

Youth Apprenticeship Capstone Experiences: Youth Apprenticeship is a highly structured WBL program for students who are age 16 or older and in the eleventh or twelfth grade. Youth Apprenticeship experiences provide students with the opportunity to connect what they learn in the school setting with work-site applications, thereby enabling them to make a smooth transition into employment and postsecondary education after graduation from high school. The experience is also directly related to a student's career interest/pathway and allows them to perform duties and gain skills in a workplace setting directly related to their occupational area to enhance one's future career goal. Students receive one unit of credit for each course taken.

Student Expectations

Work-Based Learning students are expected to excel in three major areas: academic performance, school and workplace behavior, and job performance.

As a Work-Based Learning student, you must maintain a C average at school and have a 90% attendance record. You must demonstrate acceptable behavior at school and at the worksite. You are expected to follow the standards of behavior of your local school system and high school as well as at the worksite. Failure to meet either of these goals can result in termination from the program and possible loss of credit.

You are to follow any additional standards required by your job site. Standards of behavior at the job site will be discussed during orientation.

Guidelines are included in this handbook for the following:

- Attendance Policy
- Grading
- Your Mentors
- Tips for Succeeding on the Job
- Handling Personal Relationships
- Interacting with Authority
- Courtesy
- Following Instructions
- Personal Dress and Appearance
- What's Next

Attendance Policy

The Work-Based Learning Program initiative strives to instill the importance of positive work habits and attitudes both on the job and in the classroom. You must assume responsibility for regular attendance at:

- your school
- your worksite on the assigned days

Remember, if you do not attend your high school you cannot report to the job site except by special permission.

YOUR ATTENDANCE WILL AFFECT YOUR ELIGIBILITY FOR CREDIT. It is also important in your evaluation by both your mentor and teacher.

YOU MUST GO TO WORK EVERY DAY THAT YOU ARE REQUIRED TO BE IN ATTENDANCE. You are considered an employee of the business and your mentor depends on you to be at work every day. Your mentor assigns you important work daily and if you are absent then that work is not completed. **YOU ARE AN EMPLOYEE OF THE BUSINESS PARTNER** and you must follow the same rules as other employees.

- If you are sick and cannot attend work, you **MUST** call your mentor **BEFORE** you are scheduled to begin work that day. You should always carry your mentor's number with you.
- If you know you will be unable to attend work in advance, for example, you must take a test at school, let your mentor know why you are going to be absent and the days you will be absent.
- We **STRONGLY** encourage you to schedule all doctor and dentist appointments outside of your work hours, however, should you have an appointment, let your mentor know **PRIOR** to the day of the appointment.
- If you are absent due to a death in the family, you must call or have someone else call your mentor and instructor.
- Unexpected absences are considered to be evidence of undesirable work behavior and are **STRONGLY** discouraged.
- School related absences **MUST BE CLEARED** through your Career Related Education Specialist (Work-based Learning Coordinator). This includes field trips, competitions, testing dates, etc. Always mark in your attendance log the school-related reason for being absent, for example, field trip – Smith.
- **PLEASE REMEMBER** that Meriwether County is under an attendance policy of 8 absences or less per semester. If you miss more than eight days in your other classes then your Work-Based Learning credit will also need to be appealed. If you are involved in an internship which is actually your classroom instruction at the worksite and you miss eight days, you will have to appeal for credit.

Grading

Grades are an important part of the Work-Based Learning program. In order to help students keep an average that will help them succeed in high school at work and Post Secondary the following guidelines have been established:

- Your school Career Related Education Specialist (Work-based Learning Coordinator) will have specific guidelines on how your grade will be determined. It is **IMPORTANT** that you are prompt in turning in **ALL PAPERWORK ON TIME** and **COMPLETELY FILL OUT ALL FORMS/RECORDS**.
- Thank you notes, journal entries, checklists, workplace evaluations, etc. are ALL part of your grade for the semester.
- At the end of each grading period, the Career Related Specialist (Work-Based Learning Coordinator) will check grades. It is the **STUDENT'S** responsibility to take a copy of their Progress/Report Card to the School Coordinator.
- In the event that the student has not maintained a C average or better, the student will be placed on probationary status until the next grading period.
- In the event that the student's grades have not improved by the next grading period (brought up to a C average), the student's grades will be reviewed by the Work-Based Learning Advisory Committee for possible exit from the program.
- Paperwork must be turned in on time and notebooks continually updated.

Your Mentors

What is a mentor?

A mentor is a friend, a counselor, a tutor, a coach, a supervisor, someone you can trust.

This may be the first job for many for you and you are unsure of what is required of you at your work site. Your mentor will be there to answer questions, and encourage you so that you can succeed on the job.

Communication is very important. If you do not understand directions or are unclear about certain information you are encouraged to ask questions. Share information about yourself with your mentor. Your mentor wants to get to know you and your goals for the future. Like a coach, your mentor can train you for success in the world of work.

Questions about your work site?

ASK YOUR MENTOR FIRST. You may then be directed to contact another person in the office. Your mentor will explain rules and safety standards and show you how to operate equipment needed to perform your job duties. **REMEMBER, THE MENTOR IS THERE TO HELP YOU.**

Tips for Succeeding on the Job

Listed below are some tips that will help you succeed on the job:

- Be neat and clean. Dress appropriately for the work environment.
- Be friendly and courteous.
- Keep yourself occupied at all times. If you have a job to do—do it. If you don't have something to do, ask your mentor.
- If you have a work-related problem, it is your responsibility to talk with your mentor first. If the problems continue, consult with your school facilitator or coordinator.
- If you have a problem with school assignments, it is your responsibility to talk with your school facilitator immediately!
- Take criticism without resentment and learn from constructive criticism.
- Don't make excuses. Chronic excuse makers are rarely believed.
- Give your best effort at all times. Remember, your job is important.
- You are entitled to respect on your job. Your mentor and your fellow workers are also entitled to respect. Give the same courtesy you expect in return.
- Always notify your mentor if you are going to be absent. **Attendance at school and work is a must.**
- Ask questions if you do not understand directions or if you need more information to do your job.

Handling Personal Relationships

- Personal calls during work hours are not allowed.
- Socializing is limited to break time and lunch.
- Visiting fellow students during work hours is not permitted.

Interacting with Authority

The relationship you have with your mentor will be one of the most important relationships you will have during your Work-Based Learning experience. Applying the guidelines you've already read and the advice below will help you have the best possible relationship with your mentor.

- Always treat your mentor with courtesy and respect.
- If you need something, ask for it, don't demand it.
- Accept constructive criticism
 - Listen to it
 - Learn from it
 - Don't feel put down

Constructive criticism is meant to help you improve your future work performance. It is an important part of working. If you accept what is being said, you can learn what to do the next time.

Courtesy

Showing courtesy to both your supervisor and your fellow workers will make a difference. Remember these easy guidelines:

- Be courteous to fellow workers and others.
- Always say "please" and "thank you."
- Make courtesy a habit.

Treat co-workers, patients, customers, and/or clients with respect and sensitivity.

Following Instructions

Performing your duties correctly will help you achieve success on the job. Responsible workers have learned that following all instructions from their mentors or fellow workers completely and accurately guarantees that the job will be done right!

Follow these steps:

- LISTEN

Concentrate on the instructions you are receiving. Pay attention to the details; they will be important when you are completing the task. Look at the person while listening to them.

- TAKE NOTES

Write down important details as you receive your instructions. You can refer to your notes as you complete the task.

- ASK QUESTIONS

Be sure you understand the instructions. If you don't, ask your mentor to repeat them or explain them further. You can be sure that your mentor would rather repeat instructions than have you repeat a task if it is not done correctly!

- FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS EXACTLY

Don't try to create a shortcut by omitting a step. The task may not make sense to you, but if you follow the instructions exactly, you'll get it done correctly.

Personal Dress and Appearance

It's easy to maintain a professional look at all times at the workplace if you follow these guidelines:

- Dress appropriately at the worksite.
- Keep your hair well groomed and in an appropriate style.
- Keep make-up, perfume and jewelry to a minimum. Jewelry should include only a watch, class ring, wedding/engagement ring; NO “dangling” earrings.
- You must follow the dress code of the school you are assigned. If you are unsure of the dress code, you will definitely need to ask your mentor.
- Once you begin working, you will be instructed about appropriate dress for your job. In general, do NOT wear the following items at the workplace:

Hats, jeans, shorts, miniskirts, sandals, sheer or low-cut blouses, tank tops, spandex, and cropped blouses that show your stomach or back.

What's Next?

Now that you know the ground rules, the following pointers will keep you advancing on the job track:

Take Pride in Your Work

Learn to do your job well and fast. Ask questions. Work toward knowing you can perform your job better than anyone else. When your employer needs someone for a higher level position, he or she may consider you.

Plan Your Work

Planning and organizing your work makes you more efficient and less likely to make costly mistakes.

Do More than the Required Minimum

Do your share of the work and then some! Your employer will notice and remember the extra things you do.

Do All the Work that Has to be Done

Every job has parts to it that are no fun, but the work isn't done until every part is finished. A mechanic, for example, may hate to put away tools and clean up. The job, though, is not finished until this is done.

Listen Carefully to Directions and Instructions

Do the job as it has been explained to you. Listen carefully! If you don't understand, ask questions!

Work Quickly Without Disturbing Others

Each employee has a specific job to perform. Personal phone calls and conversations take time away from your job. Business suffers when you disturb other workers.

Be Careful with Company Equipment and Materials

If your employer has to replace expensive equipment through your carelessness, you may soon be looking for another job! The same will be true if you are careless with materials and time.

Know and Follow Company Rules and Regulations

Employees must comply with rules and regulations to facilitate company operations such as special dispatch schedules, safety rules, dress codes, working hours and what to do if you will be late or are sick.

Be Polite and Get Along with Fellow Workers

Your chances for succeeding on the job are greatly improved when you cooperate with your fellow workers and show a sense of humor, loyalty reality and flexibility. Strive to be like employees who are cooperative and willing to help!



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