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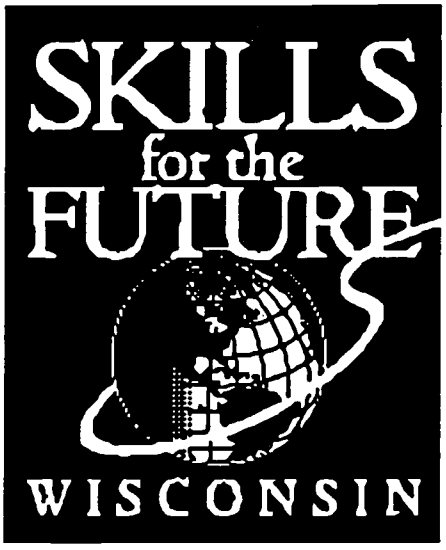
ABSTRACT

This guide contains material developed to help an individual prepare to be a mentor in the Wisconsin School-to-Work Initiative. It is designed to assist a training facilitator while allowing for individual creativity and local customization. Many informative sections are followed by reflective thinking exercises. Section topics include the following: a definition of a mentor, school to work and mentoring, cooperative education program elements, work-based learning environment, the youth, mentor/student relationship development, communicating effectively in a mentor relationship, effective communication strategies, guidelines for giving and receiving useful feedback, questioning skills that open invitations to talk, understanding learning styles, giving constructive feedback, clarifying one's expectations with learning plans, the assessment process, and assessment based on the learning plan. A suggested orientation checklist and sample mentor activity log are appended. Other publications provided are as follows: Life Work Planning Guide, a student and parent guide to high school planning, that covers student interests, recommended courses, needed knowledge and skills, career areas of interest, and general subject areas for one's career choice; two position papers, "The Role of Vocational Student Organizations in Making the School-to-Work Transition" and "The Role of Teachers in the School-to-Work Transition"; and a brochure describing Wisconsin's school-to-work educational initiative. (YLB)

Wisconsin Cooperative Education State Skill Standards Certificate Program



Mentor Training Guide
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

John T. Benson
State Superintendent

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Introduction

Congratulations! You have decided to become involved in the Wisconsin School-to-Work Initiative by serving as a mentor. You will play a significant role in helping students achieve success in the workplace. Because of your involvement and commitment to this program you are providing the opportunity for the students to experience the world of work and connect school related instruction with real work situations.

The information in this guide will help prepare you for your role as a mentor and answer the following questions:

What is my role?

What is a mentor?

What skills will I need to have for effective mentoring?

What is the skill certificate for cooperative education?

It is important to recognize that mentoring is a learning process that requires continued learning and practicing your skills. On-going training is essential to maintaining open communications between teachers, students, parents and mentors.

The material contained in this guide is designed to serve as a foundation for specific instruction and mentoring skills. The guide is intended to assist a training facilitator while allowing for individual creativity and local customization.

Definition of A Mentor

The word "mentor" originated in Greek mythology. A man named Mentor was entrusted with the family and possessions of Odysseus who was fighting in the Trojan War. Because of the trustworthy job Mentor did, the word "mentor" has come to mean a knowledgeable and dependable person, who takes a direct and personal interest in helping another person.

The key words that describe a mentor are "provide support and encourage." This doesn't mean you are expected to remake the student learner you are working with.. You already possess valued skills in your organization and are viewed as a role model by others. Your role as a mentor is to help the student develop self-understanding and to provide key information about your industry.

Remember, you also gain in this relationship. An awareness of someone else's situation can make you more aware of your own strengths and weaknesses, sharpen your own communication skills, and broaden your perspective.

Definitions:

Men•tor (noun) is a wise and trusted counselor or teacher. A tutor.

Tea•cher (noun) One that teaches. To impart skill or knowledge. To cause to learn by experience or example.

Reflective Thinking Exercise

Think back to a time when you had a good mentor. Someone who really had an impact on you.

What characteristics or qualities did this person possess?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

School to Work and Mentoring

As an industry member, you are involved in a national and state wide effort to help students connect learning and work. Helping students understand the relevance between their school instruction and the work world is all part of the Wisconsin School-to-Work initiative.

The Wisconsin school-to-work cooperative education skill standards certificate programs are designed in partnership with business and industry representatives and educators around the integration of school based and work based learning, along with related career development experiences.

Every employment opportunity today requires the application of knowledge and skills in a real-world context. The cooperative education skill standards certificate program encourages students to move through a series of learning activities with opportunities for career exploration, further learning and employment skills based on state standards endorsed by business and industry.

Mentoring is a partnership based upon mutual respect, with both parties freely contributing to the discussion as equals working together.

As a mentor you will bring cultural value to the workplace. Your experience and talents will serve as a foundation of skill and knowledge for a fellow worker. A strong mentoring relationship is one of sharing and communicating personal and workplace needs.

"Lead by Example"

Reflective Thinking Excercise

The Mentor/Learner Relationship

The Pygmalion Effect

Pygmalion was a Greek sculptor who believed so strongly in his creation of a female figurine that the Goddess Venus gave the statue life. Venus knew that Pygmalion's high expectations would make his life with his creation perfect.

WE give life (or death) to people through our expectations:

HIGH Expectations lead to HIGH Performance.

LOW Expectations lead to LOW Performance.

Discuss within your group the Pygmalion Effect and implications of creating a positive expectation effect.

Cooperative Education Program Elements

The following questions/answers address some of the basic elements of the cooperative education program.

What is State Certified Cooperative Education Program?

A program which integrates career related classroom instruction with work based learning. A learning plan is developed locally between the supervising teacher and employer. A student learning plan is based on the industry based state skill competencies. The program involves a minimum of 480 hours of paid workplace experiences under the supervision of a trained mentor.

Who is eligible to participate in this program?

Juniors or seniors in high school who are on target to graduate from high school and can demonstrate academic competency are eligible. Students must also be enrolled in a related class.

How were the competencies identified?

The state competencies were identified and validated through a consensus building process involving business and industry representatives, and high school, technical college, and university educators.

Who evaluates the student?

The teacher coordinator and workplace mentor are equally responsible for the assessment of student performance. Students must complete the competency portfolio list with a 90% (ratings of 2 and 3) or better proficiency rating.

Work Based Learning Environment

Providing a safe working environment for employees is a priority for all employers. For students enrolled in cooperation education, safety instruction is an important part of the school based and work based instruction.

A minimum of 15 hours of combined safety instruction must be taught as a part of the training instruction. The mentor and teacher-coordinator should work together to identify and determine appropriate instruction. This list is only a guide to begin the discussion. There may be several other issues relevant to the work situation.

Check list:

- ❑ Safety concerns with equipment used on the job
- ❑ Safety concerns with work procedures and materials
- ❑ Work-site policies
- ❑ Child Labor Laws
  - Number of hours/per day/per week
  - Type of work prohibited to minors
- ❑ Acquisition of work permit
- ❑ Transportation
- ❑ School policies relate to
  - absenteeism
  - academic performance
- ❑ Proper dress code for work
- ❑ Conflict resolution procedure
- ❑ Other

Reflective Thinking Activity

Discuss in small groups some of the concerns centered around work site safety. Generate a list for on-going communication practices between the school coordinator and the work site mentor.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

The Youth You Supervise

Typical adolescents of 16, 17, or 18 have almost attained their adult ability to learn. They have also reached the age when they want to reason things out, to understand the principle behind the action. These youths learn from observing you and their co-workers as well as from what you deliberately try to teach them. They are especially prone to imitate adults they admire.

Young people want to be successful. They may expect too much too fast. They may not realize their own limitations or the limitations of the job. You may have to help them set goals in keeping with their abilities and show them how to reach them. Success early in life is important to learning. Young workers need a role model to answer questions as they develop values and high standards.

Most young people are insecure in this stage of life. They hate to be laughed at! They don't want to ask questions that my sound silly. They are often very hard on themselves and very sensitive to criticism. They may be as critical of others as they are of themselves. They expect a lot from adults around them and feel very let down when adults fail them.

Young people have a deep need to be accepted as persons in their own right. When they are treated as adults, they usually respond with adult behavior. They value the respect of adults around them, even though sometimes they don't seem to know how to gain it. Youth often want different things from a job than adults. Human relations are important to them. They usually want to like the people they work with and to be liked by them. They will try harder and do better if they feel they are recognized and liked. If young people feel you are interested in them and desire to help them become good employees, they will probably accept you as advisor and role model.

Mentor/Student Relationship Development

The consensus of the research done on mentoring is that after mentor and student meet, the process evolves into two stages:

The Initiation Stage

During the initial stage the student may view you with more esteem and honor than is truly necessary. This makes it important that you help the student view the process realistically. In addition, the student may feel extremely incompetent, awkward, and may even refer to themselves in unflattering terms. As a mentor, you need to be aware that this may happen and to reaffirm the student's positive traits and self-worth. You and the student may feel that both are taking a chance that could expose the other to ridicule if the "correct" answer isn't always available. You will need to reassure the student that no one, no matter who it is, has all the right answers.

The Mentoring Stage

You, as mentor, need to depend on all of the training you received in both communication and relevant subject areas to lend as much support as possible. You need to understand, however, that the decisions made by the student must be the student's own. The student also has responsibilities during this step, and students may need help to recognize these. The student will have to work on being honest with her/himself and with you, making decisions that lead to competent career planning and being responsible for their own actions.

Mentor roles and responsibilities include:

- Learn techniques for effective communication and interaction with adolescents (or teach others if well skilled)
- Mediate between trainers, supervisor and student
- Inform the student about the workplace norms and customs, social aspects and expectations of the workplace
- Provide caring, consistent and concrete support and guidance to the student, set high expectations

- Have regular contact with program liaison to discuss student's progress; report serious concerns immediately to counselor

Trainer roles and responsibilities include

- Provide instruction in job and industry-related competencies
- Instruct the student in general workplace competencies
- Educate the student in workplace safety
- Assess student progress and certify skill achievement
- Report serious concerns, behavioral difficulties or student needs to the teacher coordinator

Supervisor roles and responsibilities include:

- Articulate student responsibilities and expectations up front to student and all appropriate staff
- Assist in development of student training plan
- Meet regularly with teacher coordinator
- Regularly evaluate student progress with student

All of the above roles involve an adult serving as coach, model, and "scaffold" for a young person, so that the student takes on increasing responsibility for his or her own learning, and has the confidence to do so.

All of the above will also sign a learning agreement specifying roles and responsibilities. The purpose of the agreement is to define how the mentor and learner will work together and what they hope to achieve.

Communicating Effectively in a Mentor Relationship

The following is a checklist of ideas designed to help you think about effective strategies for communicating with the student learner.

- ❑ Use clear simple language.
- ❑ Be patient and resourceful.
- ❑ Make liberal use of analogy, comparison, example and illustration.
- ❑ Use visual aids as much as possible.
- ❑ Develop a good sequence of simple to difficult step-by-step techniques.
- ❑ Use student's knowledge as a base on which to build.
- ❑ Explain and define new terms.
- ❑ Use the technique of "show and tell."
- ❑ Point out relationship of parts and processes.
- ❑ Develop concepts, history, and uses in explaining.
- ❑ Be certain the student understands the goal of the explanation.
- ❑ Encourage questions as well as ask them.
- ❑ Call attention to highlights.
- ❑ Use a short summary to strengthen your explanation.
- ❑ Share information about background, professional experiences, and satisfactions.
- ❑ Help student clarify goals.
- ❑ Compile a list of activities which meet the teaching goals.
- ❑ Set up a schedule with the student for regular meetings and feedback sessions. Be sure to agree on frequency and times, and **stick to them**. Agree on a (flexible) conclusion date.
- ❑ Formulate a clear idea of what skills the student will need to learn and/or practice.
- ❑ Revisit learning plan with student on a regular basis.
- ❑ Remember to both talk and listen.
- ❑ Brush up on your communication and teaching skills and always remember to take the student seriously. Feedback should be perceived as an opportunity for growth.
- ❑ Be sensitive to gender and cross-cultural differences.
- ❑ Be careful of possessiveness toward your student.

Effective Communication Strategies

Communications is the most important aspect of Mentoring. Practice the skills with others to be sure that you can easily demonstrate good communication skills.

Information Getting Skills

- Ask Questions
- Solicit Feedback
- Ask for Opinions and Ideas
- Accept Conflicting Ideas
- Accept Differences
- Accept Expressions of Feeling
- Listen Actively
- Brainstorm (giving off many ideas quickly)
- Acknowledge Contributions
- Draw the Learner Out
- Assume Nothing

Information Giving Skills

- Provide Verbal Explanations
- Offer Opinions and Suggestions
- Present Ideas
- Clarify with Analogies
- Use Examples
- Demonstrate or Show How
- Provide Positive Feedback
- Express Feelings
- Assume Nothing

Guidelines For Giving and Receiving Useful Feedback

I. Feedback is useful when you:

A. Describe what happened and comment on what a person can change; don't judge the person according to who or what you think they are.

B. Share your ideas; don't give advice.

C. Comment or talk about what a person is doing now; don't talk about the past actions or behaviors.

D. Explore a variety of procedures a person could follow; don't give people answers or solution.

E. Are sensitive to when it's appropriate to give feedback; don't follow your urges to say what you think any time and any place.

F. Focus on what is said; don't focus on why it is said.

II. You can make the best use of feedback you receive when you:

A. Are open and accepting to what you hear or see directed toward you.

B. Listen with an open mind.

C. Give support to the giver's efforts.

D. Ask questions about behavior being referred to.

III. The degree to which you trust a person influences feedback in four ways:

A. The more you trust people, the easier it will be to give and receive feedback from them.

B. The more you distrust people, the more difficult it will be to give and receive feedback from them.

C. Once feedback begins to develop, a feeling of trust begins to develop between two people or within a group.

D. As trust develops, feedback is more valuable and effective.

Questioning Skills That Open Invitations To Talk

An **open-ended question** encourages students to explore themselves and their concerns. Through use of the open-ended question you also communicate a willingness to assist the student in the exploration.

Open ended questions help:

- begin a conversation.
- the student to give more information about a point.
  Example: "Could you tell me more about that?"
- focus on feelings of the student.
  Example: "How do you feel about your math class?"

A **closed question** often emphasizes factual content as opposed to feeling, demonstrates a lack of interest in what the student has to say, and frequently keeps them in their place. Closed questions can be answered by a few words or a yes or no.

Examples

The following examples contain a comparison of open-ended and closed questions. In each example the content of the question is approximately the same but the structure will elicit different responses.

Open-ended: "Could you tell me a little about your English class?"

Closed: "Do you attend English class?"

Open-ended: "How do you feel about English class?"

Closed: "Do you like English class?"

Questions which give examples to help students understand their behavior better:

Closed:	Mentor:	"Do you throw things when you get angry?"
	Student:	"No."
	Mentor:	"Could you tell me what you do when you get angry?"
	Student:	"It depends on where I am. Maybe I walk away and maybe I yell at them."

Questions which focus on feelings of the student

Closed:	Mentor:	"Do you get embarrassed when people make fun of you?"
	Student:	"Yes."
Open-ended:	Mentor:	"You seem anxious. Can you tell me more about how you feel?"
	Student:	"I seem to get anxious only when I feel that a person is mad at me or mad about something I am doing?"

Reflective Thinking Activity

Activity Directions

1. Write in the space provided at least four examples to illustrate the difference between open-ended and closed questions and be prepared to discuss with the group.

AND

2. Have your four examples illustrate the purposes for open-ended questions.

Understanding Learning Styles

Each person you come into contact with is made up of a variety of characteristics that makes him/her different from others. The differences control leisure time activities, living environments, eating preferences and how a person likes to be seen by others. Differences are also evident in how individuals prefer to learn, whether in school or in the community, alone, or in a group.

Learning is influenced by your environment and inherited biological characteristics. These influences may include: the learning environment, temperment, sensory strengths and weaknesses, unique physical needs, concrete or abstract reasoning abilities, reflective or active processing preferences, your brain's make-up and many others.

There have been studies on how students process the information they are given. Such studies show that students can learn the same information but through different approaches, called learning styles. The simplest learning style classifications consider three ways students take in information:

- **Auditory learners.** Students who learns best by hearing and listening is an auditory learner. They typically like to listen to stories, jokes and music, and they can remember what they have heard. They also tend to have a large vocabulary and love to talk.

- **Visual learners.** Visual learners remember information best if they see something, such as events in a movie or something they have read. They absorb knowledge by reading words and looking at pictures or diagrams. These students usually enjoy books.

- **Tactile/kinesthetic learners.** These hands-on students learn best when they are able to handle and physically manipulate things. Another term to describe this style is **applied learners.**

The largest percent of students are tactile/kinesthetic learners or a combination of tactile/kinesthetic and the visual learner style. However, it is best to attempt to understand the style of the individual student. Ask the student, "How do you like to learn?" It may be necessary to combine several styles. Give the student a copy of written instructions; give the students oral instructions and repeat, repeat, repeat; demonstrate the procedure. Do not interpret a nod of the head or a simple "yes" as a indication that the understanding is there. Request that they demonstrate the procedure. They are probably reluctant to ask for further clarification.

Also remember that students, as all of us, respond to praise. Always assess the performance and give construction feedback.

Learning Strategies/Styles
(A checklist)

- ❒ Thoroughly explain the **why** before showing the **how**. Complete one step at a time, making certain that the student understands before proceeding to the next step.

- ❒ Present materials or procedure to be learned. Present one point at a time. Never assume that the student knows. Remember, procedures familiar to you will be foreign to the student.

- ❒ Demonstrate when possible. Always show the student, allowing him/her to repeat the process. Illustrate a task to be done, use an example, always show more than you tell, and correct errors immediately.

- ❒ Apply the learning. After your detailed explanation, have the student demonstrate the procedure.

- ❒ Observe the student under actual working conditions. Correct faulty procedures and techniques, and test student's knowledge and understanding. Make certain the student knows where to get assistance. Check his/her judgment. When the student is ready for the job, let him/her assume the responsibility; this is the best possible proof that you instructed well.

- ❒ Never criticize in the presence of others. Always connect in private.

"I hear and I forget
I see and I remember
I do and I understand"

Confucius

Giving Constructive Feedback

Feedback: The Key Leadership Tool

Feedback and Leadership

Feedback can be positive or negative. Either way it is one of the most important tools available to a person because:

- People cannot be expected to care very much or very long about how they behave or work if they do not know the effects or results of that behavior or work.
- Positive feedback is a form of **recognition** and recognition is one of the most powerful **motivators** at the service of the mentor. Positive feedback can maintain high standards and lead to further improvement.
- Most people want to do well most of the time. They are more likely to attempt to correct their behavior or work if they know that it is inadequate or has adverse results or effects. Negative feedback is the key to correction and improvement. But **how** negative feedback is provided is absolutely critical.
- The effective use of positive and negative feedback builds trust and promotes a strong working relationship.

Confusions About Feedback

- Positive and negative feedback is **never judgmental**; pure feedback is **descriptive**. It provides individuals with information that they can use in making a self-evaluation. People who make **their own** judgments and decisions are more **committed** to them.
- Feedback may be used with or without praise or criticism, and effective leaders choose carefully whether and when to add praise or criticism to their feedback. The confusion arises mainly because effective leaders frequently combine positive feedback with praise; they less frequently combine negative feedback with certain kinds of criticism.

Positive Feedback and Praise:

- Positive feedback differs from praise; positive feedback simply provides information about results or effects that the student is likely to —or should— feel good about. Praise is when the mentor adds his/her own judgements to the feedback or expresses his/her own feelings of pleasure or approval about the results.

EXAMPLE

A leader calls a work group together and says:

> "I just got the latest defect report and I thought you'd like to know that we had the lowest defect rate in the plant —0.7%, half of standard." (feedback)

He/she goes on to add:

> "This is the third week in a row that we've had the best defect rate, and I think that reflects well on the care and effort you've all put in." (further feedback and judgment/evaluation)

Finally, he/she says:

> "You've done a geat job and I appreciate it." (judgment/evaluation and statement of feelings, i.e., praise).

It is very important to recognize that positive feedback and praise should not be limited to outstanding or unusual achievements. People need to know what they have done adequately; they need to be told when they have met standards, not just when they have exceeded them. (On the other hand, it is just as important not to go to such excesses of language and emotion that the message—and the messenger—can be dismissed as "rah-rah.")

Effective leaders "catch someone doing something right" every day. They combine positive feedback, judgments/evaluations, and statements of positive personal feelings in ways appropriate to the circumstances. This may be as simple as "Jim, I see we got that order out on time." Or, "Mary, the customer just called me and said that shipment tested out fine." Or, "Sam, I appreciate your stepping in and helping out." Or, "Hey everybody, everything met specs today. Thanks a lot."

Negative Feedback and Criticism:

- Negative feedback provides information about negative results or effects that the recipient is likely to—or should—feel unhappy about. Technically, criticism occurs when the sender adds his/her own evaluative—in this case negative—judgments to the feedback or expresses his/her own feelings of displeasure or disapproval about the results.

- Effective leaders weigh carefully whether, when and how they should add judgments/evaluations or personal feelings to negative feedback. Why?

- An effective leader's purpose is to improve worker performance. He/she knows that most people do not want to do a poor or inadequate job. He/she also knows that the main reasons people do a poor job are:

    - They don't know what a good job is: what is the goal or standard, what should be the outcome or result.

    - They don't have the resources (tools, information, time, skills, etc.) to do a good job—or there are obstacles or barriers preventing them from doing a good job.

    - They don't know they are doing a poor job—that is they don't have the feedback that they are not doing well.

If people do not know they are doing poorly, they assume they are doing adequately and see no reason to take steps to improve. If they know that their results are poor, most people most of the time will take steps on their own to improve. It has been estimated that at least fifty percent (and often a lot more) of performance problems will be corrected by the simple use of feedback, with or without a request to improve.

For instance:

Supervisor:	"Hey, Joe, I just got a call from Quality Control that we're two percent out of spec."
Joe:	"Oh, OK, I'll hop right onto it."
Supervisor:	"Mary, did you know that the data you gave me isn't in the right format?"
Mary:	"Gee, no. What format do you want me to use?"

OR

Supervisor:	"I notice, Bill, that you usually come back from break five minutes late. I'd like you to get back on time like everyone else."
Bill:	"Oh, I didn't think it mattered as long as we met our quota."
Supervisor:	"It does matter because no one can start until you get back and that's causing resentment."
Bill:	"I didn't know that. I've been making some phone calls on break, but I'll wait till lunch from now on."

Reflective Thinking Excercise

List three things another person can do to help you change for the better. Use personal examples such as weight loss. etc.

Think about how another person could really help you.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What makes you feel best when you are making progress toward a significant personal goal? List three things that help you make progress.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

When you try something new but run into problems, how would you like other people to react or behave? List three behaviors you would like.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Clarify Your Expectations With Learning Plans

Creating and Using a Learning Plan

Part of your role as a mentor is working with Learning Plans. The Learning Plan is the bridge between school and work since it states which competencies the student will learn at school and which competencies the student will learn on the job. The Learning Plan helps everyone stay on track. It is the vehicle through which you and the teacher coordinator will record your observations of the student's progress.

Who creates the Learning Plan?

The co-op partners, the teacher coordinator, mentor, and student (and in some cases, the parents) work together to create the Learning Plan. This needs to be done prior to each new grading period.

What are the mechanics of creating a Learning Plan?

The teacher coordinator will have a Learning Plan form that can be filled out when a meeting is held among the co-op partners. The Learning Plan covers a specific period of time, usually one grading period. It includes space for indicating where a student demonstrated the competency, the date this was observed, and comments. The Learning Plan also includes some identifying data. All partners should receive a copy. Each Learning Plan should build on the last one.

How do you evaluate a student's progress?

Each of the co-op partners needs to share similar views regarding evaluation of the student's progress. What do the competencies mean? What does "able to perform" mean? The co-op partners need to have a discussion at the beginning of the co-op experience so that everyone has the same expectations. In all cases, the student must have **demonstrated** mastery of the competency in some way.

As the student works through the competencies, the teacher coordinator and/or the mentor will fill in the observation data.

How do we decide on which competencies to pick for each Learning Plan?

Typically students will have one hundred or more competencies to master in about a year's time. In order to stay on track, it is recommended that a student works on approximately one-quarter of the total competencies each quarter.

The co-op partners decide which competencies seem to make the most sense to work on in any quarter. This decision is based on the school curriculum and activities likely to be offered during that quarter and the kinds of worksite activities which the student will likely be exposed at the worksite during the same time frame.

What responsibility do students have for his/her learning?

Students need to accept responsibility for their learning. Students should be monitoring their progress on a continuous basis. They need to make sure they are making steady progress, in order to master all competencies by the end of their co-op experience.

(sample)

Learning Plan

Student:	Employer:	Workplace Mentor:	
Job Title	Teacher Coordinator:	Date:	Grading Period:

Job Description:

Reference Materials:

Skill Certificate Competencies	Related Instruction	Where Observed	Date Observed	Initials	Comments

Student Signature	Teacher Coordinator	Workplace Mentor Signature	Parent/Guardian

* The above learning plan may be continued on additional pages

The employment of the learner shall conform to all federal, state and local laws and regulations, including non-discrimination against any applicant or employee because of race, color, sex, national origin, or any background as covered by local legislation. This policy of non-discrimination shall also apply to otherwise qualified handicapped individuals.

The Assessment Process

Guiding Principles for Assessment

1. The student is in charge of his/her own learning. This is a skill that is part of a person's learning efforts. Students/people need to develop the skills of planning for learning, thinking about what they are learning, checking progress, and setting new learning goals. The mentor is a person who facilitates the student's progress, and assists in setting new learning goals. The mentor is a person who facilitates the student's progress in the work site.

2. A goal of the team work between teacher coordinator, workplace mentor, and student is that over time the student will assume greater responsibility for the initiating and following through on the assessment process. Students need to know how to seek information and how to apply the information to their work.by seeking feedback about his/her work performance, asking questions, identifying concerns, knowing when they need to ask questions, and improving the quality of questioning and communication.

3. The Assessment Process is about obtaining meaningful and useful information about the student's progress. There is a need for each member of the team (teacher coordinator, mentor, and student) to share similar expectations regarding the assessment criteria. What do the competencies mean/include? What does "able to perform at every level skill" mean? Where will competencies be demonstrated—school, workplace, VSO, etc.,

4. Within the assessment process there are three elements to consider:

    a. The reasons for assessing–(1) identifying learning needs, (2) checking progress, and (3) summing up what was learned.

    b. The methods of assessing–(1) observation (in the workplace, school, community, simulations, situation cases), written (essays, diaries, tests), (3) verbal, (4) instruments, checklist, questionnaires.

    c. The criteria used in assessing–(1) the content which includes both process and product and (2) the performance, or how well the activity was completed.

Assessment Based On The Learning Plan

Assessment of the student's performance during each grading period must be based on the learning plan developed by the mentor, student and teacher coordinator. A procedure for student assessment is described below.

The teacher coordinator and the workplace mentor have the following responsibilities.

1. Working together the workplace mentor and the teacher-coordinator evaluate the student's performance for each task and competency previously identified. For those tasks on which the student receives a low rating, the workplace mentor identifies specific areas where improvement is needed and suggests ways the student can improve performance. For tasks on which the student receives high marks, the workplace mentor may give examples which illustrate the outstanding performance. The workplace mentor and the student sign the learning plan and keep a record.

   Students may master some tasks and competencies at both school and work. Additional tasks and competencies to be mastered and assessed during the next grading period are determined and a new learning plan is designed. During the assessment process it is important to allow students the opportunity to do self assessment.

2. Communicate the results of the assessment to the student.

   The teacher coordinator and the workplace mentor meet with the student to discuss the evaluation. Identify areas that need to be improved, and inform the student of the workplace mentor's suggestions for improvement. Also identify strengths that have been pointed out on the job and in the classroom. Provide evidence to support the evaluation of the tasks and competencies.

   Ask the student to sign the learning plan. Give the student a copy of the tasks and competencies identified for the next grading period and discuss the new learning plan.

3. Continue the evaluation process. For each assessment period established by the school, the teacher, working with the student and workplace mentor, should repeat this process.

To achieve mastery of the state approved competencies the student must receive a proficiency rating (3 or 2) on 90 percent or more of the total competencies identified for that certificate. The remaining 10 percent can be issued at the introductory level (1) or may not have been assessed. Students falling behind on the total number of proficiency ratings at the end of each grading period should be receiving additional support assistance in skill development.

High school credit must be issued for the cooperative education experiences.

Suggested Orientation Checklist

Instructions: Use one checklist for each coop student. Check each item as it is completed. Review information with the student after five days to ensure thorough comprehension.

- ❑ Introduce student to persons with who the student will have contact.
- ❑ Show the student the location of office equipment and supplies the student will need.
- ❑ Explain the duties of the student's first assignment.
- ❑ Inform student as to who the supervisor will be and from whom orders will be taken.
- ❑ Inform co–workers of their relationship to student and solicit their cooperation.
- ❑ Inform student of arrival time, quitting time, check–in procedures and check–out procedures, and who to contact when an absence is unavoidable.
- ❑ Inform student of lunch and break time and relief procedures and regulations.
- ❑ Inform student of facilities available such as rest rooms, lunch room, telephone, coat rack, etc.
- ❑ Inform student as to appropriate clothing to be worn.
- ❑ Inform student of time recording procedures, pay schedule, deductions from pay and computation of wages.
- ❑ Inform student about any information which is to be kept confidential.
- ❑ Familiarize student with employee benefits.
- ❑ Inform student of promotional possibilities in your firm.
- ❑ Inform student of proper safety procedures.

(sample)

Mentor Activity Log

Student Name_____ Mentor Name_____

Date of Meeting	Topic(s) Discussed	Action Taken	Others Involved	Additional Comments

CREDITS

A Resource Guide for Cooperative Education in Technology Education
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Youth Mentor, Contributing Knowledge and Experience to Help Others Grow,
Fox Valley Technical College, Appleton, Wisconsin

Platteville High School Cooperative Education Guidelines, Platteville, Wisconsin

Printing Mentor Training Guide, Minnesota

A Guide for Wisconsin State Certified Cooperative Education Skill Certificate Program

Life Work Planning Guide

A student and parent guide to high school planning

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
John T. Benson, State Superintendent

What might I like to do?

Four short years from now, you will reach out to receive your high school diploma. Your choice of courses and other school activities may determine how many doors that diploma opens for you. By making wise decisions now, you will have greater opportunities.

For you:

❒ I have considered my interests and my academic strengths and weaknesses.

❒ The three most important things I need to remember about myself as I make career decisions are: _____
_____
_____

❒ My career goal is _____.
I know what additional skills and knowledge I will need to fulfill my goal.

❒ I know I will need a degree, certification, specialized training, apprenticeship or work experience in: _____
_____
_____

❒ Extracurricular experiences and community service in which I plan to participate to support my career goals are: _____
_____
_____

❒ Areas I still need help in from my parents, counselors, and/or teachers: _____
_____

For your parent(s) or guardian(s):

❒ I have read this booklet and understand the general high school graduation requirements, high school courses my child needs to take to meet his or her goals, and postsecondary requirements that will be needed for my child to fulfill his/her goals.

❒ I have discussed this booklet with my child and together we have determined high school and career plans he/she will be pursuing.

❒ I know the name(s) of the high school counselor(s) and understand that I can contact him/her (them) for assistance in career and educational planning for my child.

Am I learning the right things?

During eighth and tenth grade, you take the Wisconsin Student Assessment System (WSAS) achievement tests in mathematics, reading, English, and science. The tests include assessments that can help you find out about your interests, study skills, and plans for high school. Your counselor and teachers can help you interpret the results and plan your high school courses.

The achievement test results will give you a good idea of how well you have prepared for the school work ahead of you. You should use these results in two ways. First, you should identify your strengths and interests in which you want to pursue further study. Second, you should make sure that you plan to take additional work in any subjects in which you do not score well on the tests.

Research shows that test performance is directly related to the coursework you have taken. If you want to improve your test performance, plan to study more in the areas where the tests reveal weakness. For example, if your science scores are low, you can improve them by taking additional science courses.

You will find that many of the decisions you will face in the next few years about technical colleges, apprenticeships, universities, or work will depend, in part, on your performance on tests. It is important to prepare yourself in school so that you can do well on these tests. By taking the results of the eighth- and tenth-grade WSAS tests seriously and using that information to plan your high school program, you can help ensure that you will be prepared to fulfill the goals you set for your future.

What must I take?

Your high school will require you to complete specific courses for graduation. These courses will be valuable no matter what career choice you make.

Whether you choose to go to a state technical college, a two- or four-year college or university, or into a career immediately after graduation, the areas of knowledge described in the chart will make it easier for you to choose from among many career options.

You Need an Understanding of:		Required Years of Study*	Additional Local Requirements
English	Reading, writing, speaking, listening, grammar, and literature	4	
Social Studies	State and local government	3	
Mathematics	Arithmetic (adding, subtracting, dividing, and multiplying), algebra, geometry, and statistics	2	
Natural Science	Biology and physical science	2	
Physical Education	The value of fitness and lifetime activity	1.5	
Health	Personal, family, community, and environmental health	0.5	
Electives			

**Required by Wisconsin statute; local districts may have additional requirements*

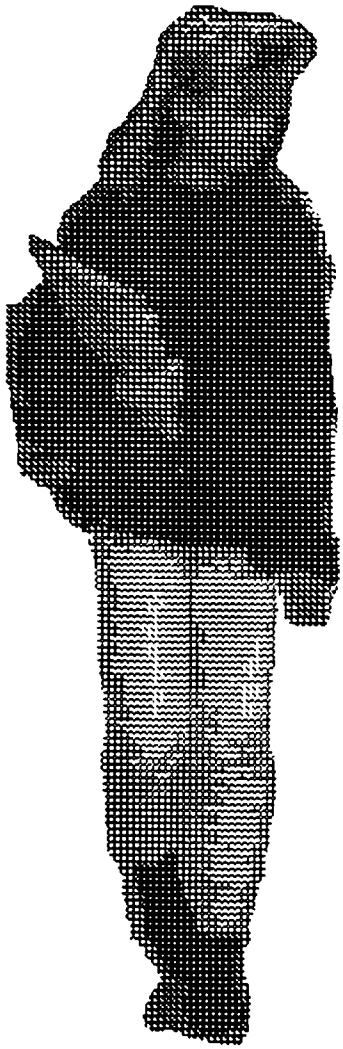
What other courses will help me?

If you plan to attend college, you will do better if you complete a "core" course of study. The University of Wisconsin System and most independent colleges and universities urge **four years of English, three years each of social studies, science, and mathematics**. They strongly encourage the study of a **foreign language** and of **computers**. Each college and university has formal entrance requirements; ask your guidance counselor for more information.

What subject areas are offered in high school?

Most high schools offer at least some courses in the subject areas described here. Check with your high school counselor to find out what is available in each general area.

- **Agricultural Education** – the study of agriculture and agribusiness from agricultural journalism to veterinary science, from farming to transporting, processing, and marketing food and fiber products.
- **Art** – the study of art history and culture; art appreciation and criticism; and art creation, including drawing, painting, photography, pottery, sculpture, and other art forms.
- **Business Education** – the study for and about business; accounting, keyboarding, computer use, American enterprise, and business concepts; preparing for a job; and basic business skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and mathematics.
- **Computer Education** – the study of computer hardware and software; data entry; using applications software; problem-solving; and computer programming.
- **Driver's Education** – the study of rules of the road; basic car maintenance and insurance; driving skills and attitudes, including the effects of alcohol and other drugs on drivers; and driver safety.
- **English/Language Arts** – the study of language, including usage and grammar; literature and reading; listening and speaking; writing and research; and using media, including computers, audiocassettes, and videotapes.
- **Environmental Education** – the study of the earth's environment; problem-solving and decision-making about environmental issues and how they relate to lifestyle; and how to balance society's quality of life with the quality of the environment.
- **Family and Consumer Education** – the study of the work of the family, including decision-making and problem-solving skills as they relate to responsibilities for family and employment.
- **Foreign Language** – learning to communicate in another language and learning about other cultures (including Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, and Latin) to participate better in our global community.



- **Health Education**– the study of accident prevention and safety; community, consumer, environmental, mental, emotional, and personal health; family life education; nutrition; disease prevention; and alcohol and other drug abuse prevention.
- **Marketing Education** – preparation for a vast array of careers in marketing, management, and starting a business. The study of promotion, sales, human relations, buying and pricing, communications, career development, and economics.
- **Mathematics** – the study of numbers, arithmetic, measurement, geometry, statistics, algebra, computing and estimating, and mathematical problem-solving.
- **Music** – performing, describing, and creating music; the elements of music, including expression, melody, rhythm, and harmony; music appreciation and criticism; and the study of history and culture.
- **Physical Education** – the study of physical fitness and body development; sports, skills, and games; lifetime, leisure, recreational, and outdoor activities; rhythm; aquatics; and gymnastics.
- **Science** – problem-solving; science knowledge (six themes—diversity, change, continuity, organization, interaction, and limitation); the nature of science, including history, rules, and methods; and science, technology, and society.
- **Social Studies** – the study of history and society; social data and policy-making; politics and law; economics; geography; institutions; international relations, races, and cultures; global interdependence; and responsible citizenship.
- **Technology Education** – the study of industry and technology (machines, materials, and processes) in the areas of construction, manufacturing, communications, and transportation to gain an understanding of life's work roles.

What knowledge and skills must I have?

With these skills you will be able to apply the knowledge you gain from your high school classes and beyond, no matter what you decide to do.

Employers name nine skills that are important for all workers to acquire, no matter how much education they may have. As you begin to think about what you would like to do after high school, think about the skills you need to get a job and keep it. Ask yourself the following questions:

Do you have a good work ethic?
Are you reliable and dependable? Are you patient and mature? Do you accept responsibility for your actions?

Are you committed to your work?
Do you give your best effort while striving to improve?

Are you able to communicate effectively?
Can you write and speak clearly and effectively? Do you listen and then respond?

Are you able to work effectively with others?
Can you accept authority and supervision? assignments? criticism? Can you work as part of a team? Do you respect the rights of others?

Are you responsible?
Can you organize your work and manage your time? Are you accurate, precise, and neat? Can you follow directions?

Will you have the skills to seek, get, and keep a job?
Will you be able to fill out a job application, develop an application letter, and write a resumé? Will you be able to do a job search and "sell yourself" in an interview?

Can you reason and solve problems?
Do you understand rules and procedures? Can you apply basic skills to your specific job?

Do you have good health and safety habits?
Do you know how to follow rules of safety? Can you handle pressure?

Do you have solid personal qualities?
Do you feel good about yourself? Do you have goals? Are you able to motivate yourself? Are you honest?

What career areas interest me?

The U.S. Department of Labor tracks careers in 14 general areas. The following list includes examples of careers in each area:

Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishery
conservationist, farmer, farm production worker, fisher, forester, veterinarian

Construction
bricklayer, carpenter, laborer, painter, plumber

Education
guidance counselor, librarian, principal, teacher, teacher's aide

Health
dental assistant, dentist, dietitian, nurse, pharmacist, physician, therapist

Industrial Production
blacksmith, foundry worker, machinist, printer, truck driver, welder

Mechanics and Repairers
jeweler, locksmith, mechanic (airplane, automobile, boat, farm equipment, motorcycle), repairer (automobile body, instrument, machinery, shoe, watch)

Office
accountant, banker, bookkeeper, cashier, computer programmer/operator, lawyer, postal clerk, purchaser, receptionist, secretary

Performing Arts, Design, and Communications
actor, architect, artist, communicator (advertising, media, public relations), dancer, florist, musician, photographer, singer

Sales
insurance agent, model, real estate agent, sales worker (manufacturing, retail, wholesale), service station attendant, travel agent

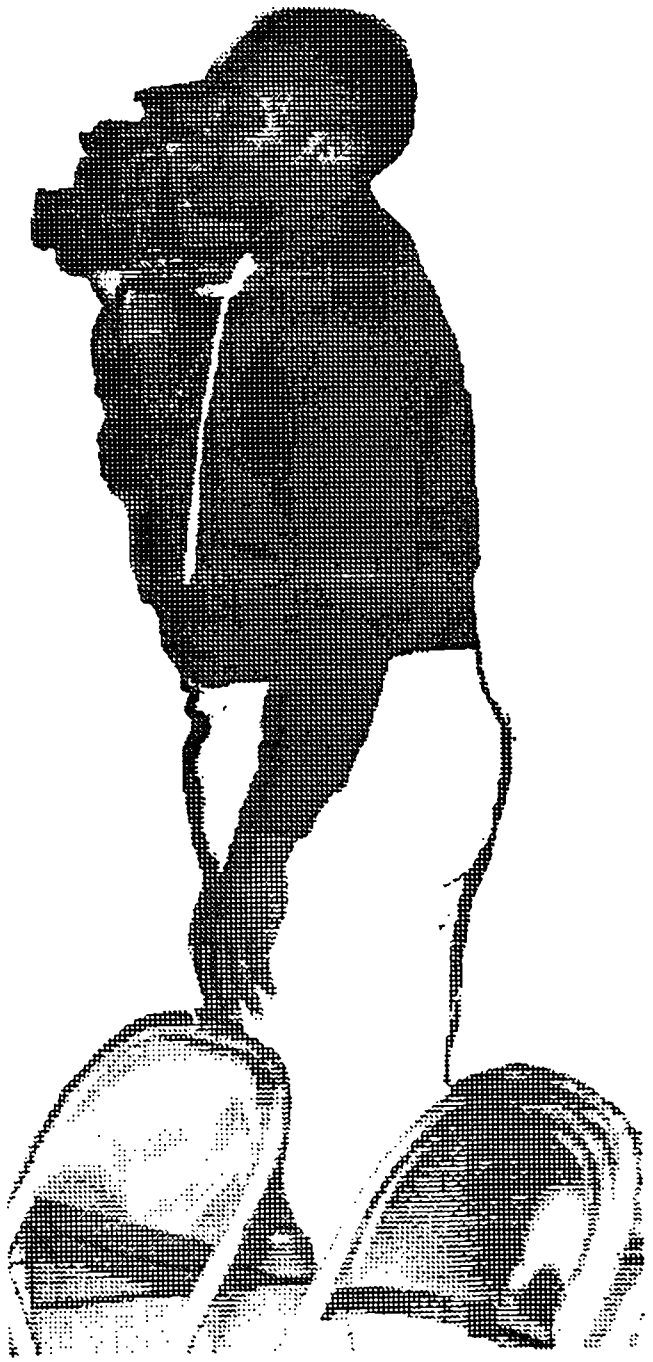
Scientific and Technical
astronomer, chemist, drafter, engineer, geologist, mathematician, physicist, surveyor

Service
barber, chef, cosmetologist, funeral director, inspector (building, health), mail carrier, meat cutter, protective service (corrections, firefighter, guard, police officer), telephone operator

Social Science
anthropologist, economist, geographer, political scientist, psychologist, sociologist

Social Service
counselor, clergy (minister, priest, rabbi), home economist, social worker

Transportation
airline worker (air traffic controller, pilot, flight attendant), driver (bus, taxicab, truck), railroad worker (conductor, engineer, station agent, track worker), sailor



Employers expect career seekers to have basic skills. Consult your high school counselor or check your local library to find out which skills you need to be successful in the area that interests you.

Which subject areas will help me find the right job?

Contact someone who is doing the job that interests you. Find out what courses they feel would be most helpful.

The chart below will help you decide which general subject areas will help you find work in the job area that most interests you. As you look at the chart, refer to the subject areas (pages 3-4) and the career areas (page 5) to get a better idea of what courses you should take to get the job you want.

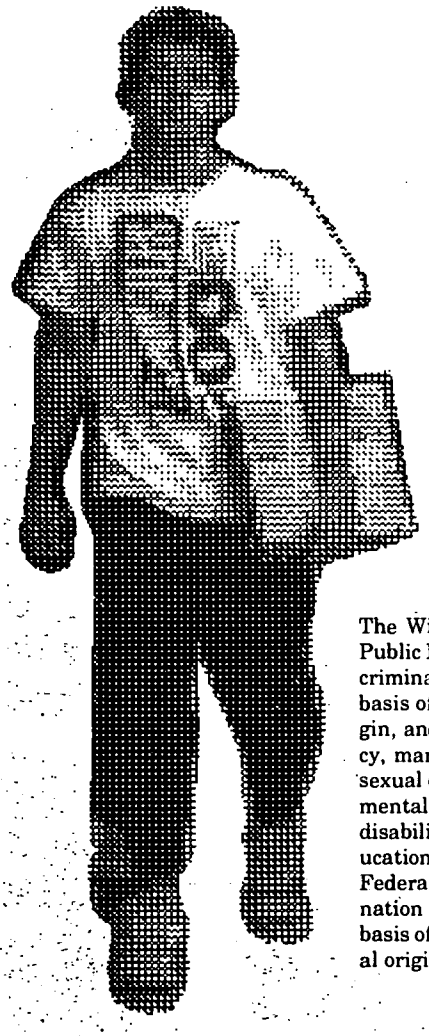
Remember that this chart is only a guide. If you have an interest in a specific subject or career not contained in this booklet, talk to your school counselor, local librarian, or someone presently working in that job area.

CAREER AREAS

SUBJECT AREAS	Agriculture/ Forestry/ Fishery	Construction	Education	Health	Industrial Production	Mechanics / Repairers	Office	Performing Arts / Design / Communications	Sales	Scientific / Technical	Service	Social Science	Social Service	Transportation
Agriculture	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓
Art			✓		✓			✓			✓		✓	
Business Education	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			
Computer Education	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Driver's Education	✓	✓	✓		✓						✓			✓
English / Language Arts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Environmental Education	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓		
Family and Consumer Ed	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Foreign Language		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Health	✓		✓	✓						✓	✓		✓	
Marketing Education	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Mathematics	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Music			✓					✓						
Physical Education		✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓			
Science	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Social Studies			✓				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Technology Education	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓

For more information...

This booklet is meant to help you think about your career options and plan your high school courses to achieve your job goals. Additional information about courses needed to enter public or private universities, two- or four-year colleges, state technical colleges, military service, or the work force is available from your high school counselor or by visiting one of the state's eight career centers. Ask your school counselor about tech prep, certified co-ops, youth apprenticeships, and work experience programs. Ask about other opportunities to learn about the world of work offered through Wisconsin's School to Work program "Skills for the Future." There are many programs that can prepare you for career opportunities.



October 1996

Your comments please...

Please send us your comments about this Life Work Planning Guide. Complete and return this postcard.

Department of Public Instruction
125 South Webster St.
P. O. Box 7841
Madison, WI 53707-7841
(800) 441-4563

1. Please check one of the following boxes. I am
   ❒ an eighth-grader ❒ a parent ❒ other _____
   ❒ a teacher ❒ a counselor

2. Check all that apply to describe how you used this booklet.
   ❒ selecting high school courses ❒ planning for college
   ❒ thinking about career goals ❒ planning for high school
   ❒ other _____

3. If you found this booklet helpful, do you want
   ❒ more high school course information
   ❒ more college/technical school information
   ❒ other _____

4. If you didn't use this booklet, what were the reasons?
   ❒ already have this information ❒ other _____
   ❒ too long

University of Wisconsin Centers:
Contact your school counselor(s) about the two-year centers, or write or call:

University of Wisconsin Centers
780 Regent Street
P.O. Box 8680
Madison, WI 53708-8680
(608) 262-1783

University of Wisconsin System:
Contact Higher Education Location Program (HELP), your school counselor, or local UW System campus admissions office for *Introduction to the University of Wisconsin System, 1996-97*. Madison: UW System, 1996 or contact:

Higher Education Location Program (HELP)
432 North Lake Street
Madison, WI 53706
HELP: (800) 442-6459
(608) 263-4567 (Madison area)
(800) 442-4621 (Telecommunication Device for the Deaf)
(M-Th: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.; F: 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)

Wisconsin Career Information System (WCIS):
Contact your school counselor about this program or contact WCIS directly.

Wisconsin Career Information System
1025 West Johnson Street
Madison, WI 53706
(608) 263-5827
(800) 446-0399

Wisconsin Independent Colleges and Universities:
Contact your school counselor or local independent college or university for *Guide to Admissions and Financial Aid* or for individual college catalogs and videocassettes.

Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
16 North Carroll Street, Suite 200
Madison, WI 53703-2716
(608) 256-7761

Wisconsin Technical College System:
Contact your school counselor, local library, or local technical college for the Wisconsin Technical College System's (WTCS) statewide directory, *Go Here. Get There.* Madison: WTCS, 1996-97 Edition.

Wisconsin Technical College System
310 Price Place
P.O. Box 7874
Madison, WI 53707-7874
(608) 266-1207

Apprenticeships
Contact your school counselor about apprenticeship opportunities or write for information from this office.

Department of Workforce Development
Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards
P.O. Box 7972
Madison, WI 534791-8975
(608) 266-0327

Office of School to Work
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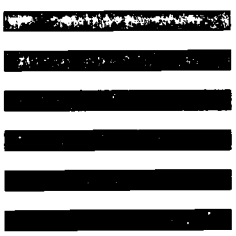

Additional copies of this booklet are available from:

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John T. Benson
State Superintendent
Robert H. Gomoll
Deputy State Superintendent

A Position Paper

THE ROLE OF VOCATIONAL STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS IN MAKING THE SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION

Vocational education is making a significant contribution to the development of a world class work force, and nowhere is this evidenced more than through the philosophy, goals, and activities of Wisconsin vocational student organizations (VSOs).

Common Components of VSOs

There are four common principles that link vocational student organizations to effective school-to-work programs; VSOs

1. motivate youth to become productive citizens,
2. enable students to achieve high academic and occupational standards,
3. link classroom curriculum to workplace skills, and
4. lead to employability skills and life-long learning.

Recognized as integral to the success of school-to-work programs are six vocational student organizations promoted by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction:

DECA - an association for marketing students;
FBLA - an association for business students;
FFA - an association for agriculture students;
FHA-HERO - an association for family and consumer students;
HOSA - an association for health occupation students;
VICA - an association for technology students.

Through a proven system of developing leadership skills, positive attitudes, and a sense of community pride, VSOs serve as a vehicle to transition students into life's work. Student organizations prepare students for life and future careers by introducing them to the corporate culture. They emphasize respect for the dignity of work, high standards, ethics, and quality skills. VSOs help develop skills that are difficult to teach in the schools' curriculum such as communicating effectively, creative thinking, problem solving, personal management, teamwork and knowing how to learn. VSOs are extremely effective "instructional tools that connect school work with life's work." VSOs are:

- an extension of the classroom/laboratory instructional program;
- an instructional strategy used to develop, improve, and expand occupational competencies;
- an avenue for students to gain personal and leadership skills;
- an avenue to increase student motivation and support curricular integration.

Linkage to Business

The active participation of business and industry is a key to the success of these programs. In Wisconsin, nearly 800 corporations, labor unions, and trade associations support vocational student organizations at the state level. Through involvement with VSOs, a business can:

- capitalize on its ability to access some of the best prepared employees,
- improve the importance and relevance of curriculum in the educational system,
- improve the image of vocational education,
- affect change in the educational process.

There is an even exchange of benefits in these partnerships: teachers provide better prepared employees, employers help teachers design and deliver instructional content, and students gain a competitive edge in accessing future employment.

Relationship Between VSOs and SCANS

The importance of integrating academic skills with technical skills has been identified through many national reports as important to a student's overall success for the present and future. For many students it is the application of academic skills that creates a true understanding of the importance of having a solid educational foundation in any career they may choose.

VSOs provide both academic and technical skill development through curriculum, professional development programs, and skill standards.

The U.S. Secretary of Labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) captured and articulated what business wants from schools. SCANS identified the qualities, skills, knowledge, and attitudes that employers value. Those qualities were divided into two categories:

Workplace Competencies

- Resources: identifies, organizes, plans and allocates resources
- Interpersonal Skills: works with others
- Information: acquires and uses information
- Systems: understands complex inter-relationships
- Technology: works with a variety of technologies

Foundation Skills

- Basic Skills
- Thinking Skills
- Personal Qualities

Today's workplace requires people with the leadership, teamwork, and communication skills to participate in the high performance workplace. VSOs have proven successful in developing these skills in students of all ages and backgrounds. According to SCANS, future workers must be capable of:

a. Knowing how to learn. VSOs encourage student-led learning and experimentation and require members to absorb, process, and apply new information quickly and effectively.

b. Reading, writing, and computation. VSOs provide an assortment of opportunities to practice and refine reading, writing and mathematical skills in operating the student-led local chapter and participating in competitive events programs.

c. Communicating effectively. VSOs encourage the refinement of speaking, listening, and feedback skills.

d. Creative thinking and problem-solving. Through chapter management activities, VSO members are provided opportunities to practice and refine their problem-solving skills in groups and learn to work effectively as a member of a team (VSO chapter).

e. Personal management. VSOs contribute significantly to the improvement of personal management skills, including: heightened self-esteem, goal-setting, goal achievement, career direction, education, and training analysis.

f. Group effectiveness. At the workplace, the "team approach" results in higher productivity, product quality, and increased quality of work life. VSO chapters are group oriented and provide numerous opportunities to develop and refine interpersonal, negotiating, and team-building skills. A major objective of the VSO is to help its members develop an inventory of skills and attitudes that can be applied successfully in the workplace to resolve problems and foster innovation.

g. Influencing others. Fundamental to all VSOs is the development of leadership and the ability of a person to influence others to act in a prescribed manner or to move in a given direction. Active involvement in a VSO provides students with numerous opportunities to develop, practice and refine leadership skills.

Conclusion

Vocational students have the opportunity to demonstrate their occupation and leadership skills through performance evaluations in local, state, and national competitions. They strive for excellence because of incentive awards and the direct evaluation provided them by business and industry.

In addition to practical hands-on experiences, VSO students are provided real-life experiences through community service projects. When students are offered the opportunity to give back to the community through service, they are more likely to understand community problems and issues and provide solutions for tomorrow.

VSO programs use state-of-the-art technologies and strategies to produce graduates who are mature, responsible, and ready to face the changing workplace. Participants develop skills and knowledges in the liberal and practical arts as well as in applied academics and intense technical preparations.

For further information on vocational student organizations, contact the Instructional Service Division, Department of Public Instruction, P.O. Box 7841, Madison, WI 53707-7841, phone: (608) 267-7101.

State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 7841, Madison, WI 53707-7841
125 South Webster Street, Madison, WI 53702 (608) 266-3390/(608) 267-2427 TDD

John T. Benson
State Superintendent

Robert H. Gomoll
Deputy State Superintendent

A Position Paper

THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN THE SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION

For the School-to-work reform effort to be successful, teachers must teach students appropriate content material and also expand their role in providing career guidance for all youth:

- Teachers must have a vision--they must look to the future and become involved in the learning process themselves. As technology changes our global economy, so must our teachers change and seek new ways to direct and guide children;

- Teachers must be willing to learn and experiment with new ideas and technologies. They must gain first-hand knowledge of the skills and expectations of the changing workplace.

The implication of this process is that teachers need more than an opportunity to learn new curriculum. They need time to design, implement and reflect on changing roles among schools and communities. There are four basic characteristics that influence the change process in educators:

- Setting high expectations for all students;

- Supporting and influencing integration of curriculum;

- Connecting curriculum to the world of work; and

- Developing teaching methodologies to be consistent with student learning styles.

School-to-work reform efforts focus on what students should know and be able to do. Curriculum needs to be systematically developed to connect school with work activities. It will be the role of the teacher to provide leadership in the change process. Since teachers are the ones most closely connected with students, the curriculum, and the school systems. Partnerships between educators and business provide many opportunities for students. In Racine, Wisconsin, (over 138 such partnerships) between the Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce and area schools have been established. Activities include volunteers in action, shadow days, a teen parent day care program, mentorships, coops and youth apprenticeships. The Racine businesses' focus is to help improve the quality of education and to foster increased cooperation between teachers and the business community.

In order to enact school-to-work reform efforts, teachers must be provided opportunities to design and adopt new curriculum and incorporate new teaching methods to bring about a shift in how they teach and what they expect of students. Teaching in all disciplines must reflect on current curriculum design, teaching

methods and assessment criteria. They must determine the quality of those processes and make improvements based on student needs. Teachers will have to look beyond the typical resources for curriculum and build partnerships with business, industry, and labor to assist in identifying realistic results. An example of this can be found in a state curriculum in biotechnology developed in cooperation among the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 12 local school districts, Wisconsin technical college staff, biotechnology industry representatives and the Biotechnology Center at the University of Wisconsin. A curriculum that involves input from higher education as well as the employability skills needed in the industry is the key to ensuring the content is delivering the skills and knowledges for necessary future occupations. This example has been strengthened with the formation of a Biotechnology Consortium that provides inservice for teachers, an ongoing communication network for new activities and ideas, continued curriculum revision, youth apprenticeship opportunities, and a resource for expanded curriculum options.

New Roles Needed for Teachers and Communities

New roles for teachers, administrators and business/industry partners are essential in order to identify appropriate learning tasks and experiences and assure high performance results for all students. Teachers, in conjunction with community representatives, will play a variety of roles in this process as coaches, mentors, resource providers, and learning facilitators. Business, industry and labor representatives, social service providers and community members also work closely with teachers to provide specialized support services and assistance.

In the past, teacher and community collaborative roles have been more closely associated with vocational teachers due to their training and experiences in the area of work-based learning. Vocational teachers have established and maintained advisory committees from the business and industry community, formulated work-based training agreements, and supervised students in work experience programs.

In order for the school-to-work reform effort to succeed, there must be a common vision of all teachers working together with the community for the benefit of their students.

The integration of vocational and academic education will improve students' basic academic skills and strengthen both vocational and academic coursework so that it is more meaningful for students. Integration involves making vocational courses stronger academically and making academic courses more applied and relevant. When students see the connection between what they are doing in class and what they plan to do in the future, they become more motivated and interested in learning. A course such as Principles of Technology was never intended to replace the traditional physics course; but by using an applied method of teaching, it improves student understanding of the relevance of the subject matter and increases the student's motivation to learn. Consequently, such an applied course can serve as a launching pad into further study in science that many students would not have previously taken.

Teachers who have become involved in designing and implementing integrated and applied curriculum become excited and rewarded when they see student results. Central to collaborative instruction is teacher teamwork and cooperation. A science and a family and consumer education teacher at DeForest High School in DeForest, Wisconsin, noted they first noticed the personal rewards from cooperative and team teaching when students wrote notes back to them in their lab journals stating that they finally understood why science was important.

As integration takes place within the instructional framework, both academic and vocational teachers progress through the following stages:

- Establishing relationships with one another. Teachers need time to build trust in one another and feel comfortable to share their personal ideas about curriculum and education.
- Learning from one another. Teachers need time to learn and understand each other's content so curriculum connections can be made.
- Instruction through teaming. As teachers work together, they develop a teaching style that builds on the strengths of each other.

Administrative and Community Support Vital For Successful Implementation

The practice of integrated teaching can take a variety of forms depending on the strengths of the individual teachers. Some teams split the responsibilities between lecture and lab, some join together to stimulate the creative thinking of students, which others integrate the content to take advantage of their own strengths. Whatever method is used, strong administrative support is needed as teacher time is required for sharing, for planning, and for implementing. Schools that have progressed in the school-to-work related areas of integrated and applied curriculum and work-based learning systems have done so with strong leadership from LVECs, principals, and district administrators. While teachers have the strongest ownership in the curriculum, they must have the support of the entire school district and community in order for implementation to occur. Teachers and administrators need to work together to ensure there is adequate time to identify curricular changes, to modify instructional techniques, and to forge new community relationships.

Conclusion

The school-to-work philosophy is based on reforming the educational system. This reform affects the following elements: classroom teachers and administrators, school organizational structure, curriculum, guidance and counseling services, and student assessment. Broad-based school reform requires new roles for teachers, but systemwide reform will not happen if only teachers change. Systemic school-to-work reform requires everyone involved to assess their function and responsibilities and be willing to build new structures and paradigms.

This paper was prepared by Joan Whittemore Loock, Business Education Consultant; Bryan D. Albrecht, School-to-Work Consultant; and Vicki J. Poole, Director of School to Work.

SKILLS for the FUTURE

SCHOOL TO WORK

W I S C O N S I N

TRANSFORMING WISCONSIN'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM.

Wisconsin's exciting new School-to-Work educational initiative opens the door to *all* students to more fully develop their potential in life. By combining rigorous school and work-based learning with greater career exploration and guidance, our educational system will develop students with stronger skills — whether students plan to go directly into the workforce, enter a technical college, or enroll in a university. Enhanced academic and technical skills are what Wisconsin's business and educational leaders have deemed *Skills for the Future*.

Under the banner of *Skills for the Future*, Wisconsin's School-to-Work initiative is a partnership, centering on students, that involves parents, educators, employers, and local, state and federal governments. It is based on changes in *what*, *how* and *where* students learn. School-to-Work combines career exploration with school-based learning and work-based learning, allowing students to connect the classroom with the world of work. As students learn about the increasingly technological nature of the working world, they will recognize the need for math, science, communications, work-readiness, and occupation-specific skills. As a student develops, he or she will identify goals and the learning pathways that can be taken to reach these goals.The creation of local public-private partnerships is the foundation of this educational reform initiative in communities throughout Wisconsin — partnerships such as:

- Elementary schools, local business and labor representatives and parents working together to teach young students about work, personal responsibility and the importance of learning;
- Business, industry and the community working with the schools to provide valuable, school-supervised work-based learning opportunities for students;
- Counselors and teachers working in internships in business and industry so that they can identify how the changing workplace and varying career opportunities might affect their work with students;
- High school and college teachers learning together how to better connect their curriculum and improve their teaching.

How will Wisconsin students benefit from School•To•Work programs?

WHY IS THIS FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN EDUCATION NEEDED?

The world that today's young people live and work in is full of exciting opportunities. It is also becoming more technological, computerized, customized and internationally competitive. Both a *strong academic foundation* and *technical know-how* are necessary in our emerging workplace. The best jobs will go to those who are both well educated and highly skilled.

The changing workplace also demands development of other attitudes and skills – a good work ethic, problem solving, critical thinking, communication, leadership and teamwork. Students need opportunities to develop in all of these academic, technical and work-readiness areas. Most students are not sure what general career area they would like to pursue.

The *Skills for the Future* School-to-Work initiative encourages students to develop their interests and start learning about how they might apply those interests and aptitudes in the world of work. Currently, even though the majority of new, good paying jobs will require education beyond high school, most students and their parents know little about what these jobs are or what skills they will require.

Information and guidance about the interesting array of opportunities available to students will be provided both within the schools and at the new Career Centers being established around Wisconsin. Students are encouraged to take an active role in planning their courses and work experiences so that they can better prepare for their next step — to a job, to a technical college, or to a four-year college or university.

- **All students will be able to develop stronger academic and technical skills for the future.**
- **Students will recognize the need for math, science and communication skills in the technological world of work.**
- **Good work habits, problem solving, critical thinking, communication, leadership and teamwork skills will be developed.**
- **All students will benefit from exploring career opportunites, identifying goals, and learning how to reach those goals.**
- **Local businesses and communities can become classrooms for work-based learning experiences.**
- **Parents can be more actively involved in all aspects of students' career exploration and development.**
- **Students who are both well educated and highly skilled will get the best jobs.**

WHAT ARE THE MAIN COMPONENTS OF SCHOOL•TO•WORK?

School-to-Work involves three interdependent components:

Career Exploration. Career exploration will be built into school curricula throughout elementary and secondary education. The goal is for students to make more informed decisions about the skills and knowledge they need in order to be better prepared for additional education or work. When students learn more about what is required in the working world, they better understand the need for strong math, science, and communication skills, as well as technical and work-readiness skills. Students are also involved in career planning to help them select courses for a smoother transition from school to additional education or work.

Wisconsin's new **Career Centers** are one-stop shops for career information. The resources include interactive computer programs which allow students to explore career information based on their interests, job related materials, career videos, brochures, and a variety of other multi-media resources on careers. These materials inform the student about appropriate courses to take in high school, recommend college or university education and training, and discuss the skills needed to succeed in various fields.

School-Based Learning. Based on the foundations built by **Tech Prep**, students are now able to learn challenging, high level concepts in a concrete way. Academic and technical subjects such as mathematics, science and communications can be taught in ways that combine hands-on technology, critical thinking skills and real-life applications. For example, in an electronics class, students learn and use chemistry and physics to understand how a timing circuit works. Or, in English composition and business, instructors integrate their instruction to include a segment on writing a business plan. Student success is shown not only by what students know, but by what they know and can do...helping students make the connection between school and the real world.

Work-Based Learning. Work-based learning includes quality learning experiences such as **Youth Apprenticeship, Cooperative Education, internships** and **job shadowing.** Youth apprenticeship and Cooperative Education programs involve high school juniors and seniors in rigorous learning experiences that combine school-based learning with work-based learning at an approved business or industry setting. Students are paid at least minimum wage and earn a regular high school diploma, an industry-approved skill certificate, and their credits may apply toward technical college. In some cases, credits may apply toward admission requirments for the University of Wisconsin. Job shadowing and internships provide other quality opportunities for students to learn about careers, the working world, and the skills and knowledge needed to be successful.

Youth Apprenticeship and Cooperative Education programs are available in:

- business
- auto technology
- drafting/design
- electronics
- finance
- food services
- health services
- hotel/motel management
- insurance
- manufacturing
- marketing
- print/graphic arts

SKILLS FUTURE
SCHOOL • TO • WORK

Wisconsin School-to-Work Public Information Committee
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Telephone (608) 266-7903

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