



Business Cooperative Work Experience Curriculum

Board Approved: 05/21/2026

Course Information

**High School
Full Year**

Course Description:

The Business Work Program provides students with structured, supervised on-the-job training that integrates classroom learning with authentic workplace experience. Students apply professional skills, business concepts, and ethical decision-making in real employment settings while receiving mentorship from both educators and employers. Through reflection, goal setting, and continuous improvement, students develop the independence, responsibility, and career readiness needed for long-term success.

.5 credits per semester are earned for 10-19 hours a week on the job site. 1 credit per semester is earned for 20+ hours per week on the job site.

Transfer Goals:

- Independently apply the skills, knowledge, and professional behaviors gained through cooperative work experience to real-world business environments.
- Adapt to diverse workplace situations.
- Effectively communicate with team members and supervisors.
- Solve problems using critical thinking.
- Demonstrate responsibility, initiative, and ethical conduct—both now and in future academic, career, or entrepreneurial endeavors.

Curriculum Standards: [DESE Business Work Program Handbook](#) (Standards begin on page 36)

Curriculum Resource(s): N/A

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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Unit 1: Assimilating to Work

Timeframe: 1st Quarter

Unit Description: In this unit, high school students in the work program successfully transition into the workforce by understanding workplace culture, expectations, and communication norms. Students will explore how to adapt to different environments, build positive relationships with coworkers and supervisors, and navigate challenges during the onboarding process. Emphasis will be placed on professionalism, initiative, and maintaining a growth mindset in a new job setting.

Enduring Understandings:

- Workplace success depends on understanding and adapting to organizational culture, expectations, and norms.
- Professionalism is key to building trust and credibility in the workplace.
- Effective communication—both verbal and non-verbal—is essential for collaboration and productivity.
- Employers value employees who take initiative, demonstrate reliability, and contribute to team goals.
- Employees should be able to read and understand their paystubs

Essential Questions:

- How can understanding workplace culture help an employee succeed in a new job or internship?
- What does professionalism look like in different work environments, and why does it matter?
- How does effective communication influence relationships and performance at work?
- What behaviors show that an employee is a reliable and valuable team member?
- Why is it important for an employee to understand their paystubs?

Unit 1 Standards	
STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
2.5.1.1	• I can express relevant information appropriately to individuals or groups taking into account the audience and the nature of the information
3.2.3.2	• I can develop constructive and cooperative working relationships with customers
3.5.2.1	• I can effectively use both internal resources and external resources to locate and gather information relevant to solving the problems
3.9.1.1	• I can understand the mission, structure, and functions of the organization
3.9.1.2	• I can recognize one's role in the functioning of the organization and understand the potential impact one's own performance can have on the

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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	success of the organization
3.11.1.1	• I can take actions to ensure the safety of self and others, in accordance with established personal and jobsite safety practices

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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Unit 2: Personal Growth on the Job

Timeframe: 2nd Quarter

Unit Description: In this unit, students focus on personal growth in the workplace by setting goals, reflect on performance, and work to develop a strong work ethic. Students will learn how to take initiative, accept feedback, and build confidence as they progress in their job roles.

Enduring Understandings:

- Responsibility, maturity, and independence grow through real-world job experiences.
- Skills such as communication, time management, and teamwork impact performance and future opportunities.
- Learning to accept and apply feedback facilitates growth in confidence and capability.
- Professional behavior influences reputation and career advancement.
- Reflecting on experiences helps plan for improvement and future success.

Essential Questions:

- How does having a job during high school develop lifelong employability skills?
- What soft skills are learned on the job, and why do they matter?
- How should an employee respond to feedback and use it to improve?
- What does it mean to be a dependable and ethical employee?
- How can an employee set goals to grow both personally and professionally?

Unit 2 Standards	
STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
1.2.3.1	• I can take responsibility for accomplishing work goals within accepted timeframes
1.3.1.1	• I can accept criticism tactfully and attempt to learn from it
1.3.4.1	• I can project a professional image of oneself and the organization
1.4.1.1	• I can persist to accomplish a task despite difficult conditions, tight deadlines, or obstacles and setbacks
1.4.2.3	• I can take initiative to seek out new work challenges, influences events, or originate action
1.7.1.2	• I can seek feedback from multiple sources about how to improve and develop
1.7.1.3	• I can modify behavior based on feedback or self-analysis of past mistakes
2.5.1.1	• I can express relevant information appropriately to individuals or groups taking into account the audience and the nature of the information

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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3.2.3.2	• I can develop constructive and cooperative working relationships with customers
3.9.1.2	• I can recognize one's role in the functioning of the organization and understand the potential impact one's own performance can have on the success of the organization

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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Unit 3: Incorporating Business Concepts into the Job

Timeframe: 3rd Quarter

Unit Description: In this unit, students are guided in applying basic business concepts such as customer service, marketing, budgeting, and productivity to their real-world job experiences. By connecting classroom knowledge to workplace practices, students will gain a deeper understanding of how businesses operate and how their roles contribute to overall success.

Enduring Understandings:

- Core business concepts enhance job performance and decision-making in the workplace.
- Real-world work experience reinforces and deepens classroom learning of business concepts.
- Employees who understand the "big picture" of business operations add greater value to their employers.
- Critical thinking and problem-solving skills are essential for applying business concepts to daily work tasks.
- Ethical decision-making and responsible business practices are fundamental to long-term career success.

Essential Questions:

- How can knowledge of core business concepts like marketing, finance, and operations help an employee perform better at work?
- In what ways does hands-on work experience deepen understanding of concepts taught in business classes?
- Why is it important to understand how job roles fit into the overall goals and structure of the business?
- How can critical thinking and business knowledge solve problems on the job?
- What does ethical decision-making look like in a business setting, and why is it important?

Unit 3 Standards

STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
1.2.1.1	• I can abide by a strict code of ethics and behavior, even in the face of opposition
1.2.3.1	• I can take responsibility for accomplishing work goals within accepted timeframes
2.5.1.1	• I can express relevant information appropriately to individuals or groups taking into account the audience and the nature of the information
2.6.1.1	• I can possess sufficient inductive and deductive reasoning ability to perform job successfully

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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3.5.2.1	• I can effectively use both internal resources and external resources to locate and gather information relevant to solving the problem
3.6.1.1	• I can operate tools, technology, and equipment in accordance with established operating procedures and safety standards

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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Unit 4: Reflection of Experience and Transfer of Skills

Timeframe: 4th Quarter

Unit Description: In this unit, students are encouraged to reflect on their job experiences to identify strengths, challenges, and key learning moments. Students will explore how the skills they've developed such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving can transfer to future jobs, education, and life goals.

Enduring Understandings:

- Reflecting on an experience and making meaningful changes to habits or behaviors is a critical workplace skill.
- Reflecting on past work experiences helps an employee set goals for continued growth in the workplace.
- Skills learned on the job are applicable in multiple aspects of one's life.
- Skills learned on the job are transferable between companies and industries.

Essential Questions:

- What self-knowledge or insights are gained through professional work experience?
- How can professional skills be applied to or utilized in non-work areas of life?
- What is the significance of reflecting on job performance and professional experiences?
- How does the effective utilization of feedback contribute to personal and professional development?
- What methods facilitate improvement and the setting of goals for success within and outside of a professional context?
- What characteristics define a transferable skill, and what strategies are used to identify such skills?

Unit 4 Standards	
STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
1.2.1.1.	• I can abide by a strict code of ethics and behavior, even in the face of opposition
1.2.3.1	• I can take responsibility for accomplishing work goals within accepted timeframes
1.3.4.1	• I can project a professional image of oneself and the organization
1.4.2.3	• I can take initiative to seek out new work challenges, influence events, or originate actions

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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1.7.3.2	• I can treat unexpected circumstances as opportunities to learn
1.7.4.1	• I can take charge of personal career development by identifying occupational interests, strengths, options, and opportunities

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