

Wisconsin's State-Certified Cooperative Education

Implementation Guide



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Introduction and Program Overview

Introduction

This guide is intended to serve as a resource for the implementation of Wisconsin's State-Certified Cooperative Education (certified co-op). The program options are designed in partnership with business, industry, labor representatives, and educators around the integration of school-based and work-based learning and appropriate career development experiences.

A certified co-op encourages students to move through a series of school-supervised learning activities with opportunities for career exploration, further learning, and employment skills based on state standards.

Three components are necessary to effectively implement a certified co-op:

- School-based learning
- Work-based learning
- Connecting activities

Quality certified co-ops are built around a series of activities that exceed a stand-alone cooperative education experience.

Implementation of this approach must consider the following quality components:

School-based Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Career development through the district Academic and Career Planning (ACP) process◆ Identification of a career major◆ Integration of academics with career and technical education (CTE)◆ Evaluation systems◆ Secondary/postsecondary partnerships
Work-based Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Employability skills development◆ Work experience◆ Workplace mentoring◆ Technical competency◆ Instruction in all aspects of an industry
Connecting Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Matching students with employers/mentors◆ Professional staff development◆ Student mentoring programs◆ Recruitment of employers◆ Community and employer relations◆ Involvement in career and technical student organizations (CTSOs)

Wisconsin's certified co-ops can assist students in transitioning from school into a career of their choosing.

The attainment of a state certificate that integrates work-based learning, school-based learning, and connecting activities contributes to college and career readiness.

Developing Skills

Certified co-ops are based on a framework of quality business and industry leadership. This leadership in cooperation with secondary and postsecondary educators sets standards, competencies, and dispositions recognizable throughout the education system. Business and industry have three major roles in providing quality assurance to the certification process:

1. Implementing industry-based skill standards

What are skill standards?

- The necessary focus for entry-level employment and continued career opportunities
- Statements of what a person must do and know to perform a job task or responsibility
- Statements of attainment that require students to demonstrate competence through a combination of school-based and work-based activities

Industry-based skill standards are developed through a collaborative process of educators and industry representatives. This process consists of a representative group of Wisconsin employers and front-line workers in a particular industry area who identify and categorize the skills necessary to succeed in that industry today. These skills are cross-referenced and linked with existing state industry educational standards. The competency list is then validated by additional employers and educators at both the secondary and postsecondary levels.

2. Providing workplace mentors who participate in assessment and skill credentialing

Cooperative education programs that implement the certified co-op certificates must establish an effective way to assess the skills identified in the student portfolio.

A workplace mentor assesses the performance of tasks on the job. This assessment provides evidence of what the student knows and can do. Mentor training in assessing workplace skills and student achievement is essential. For most students, this will be a new way of being assessed and, therefore, extra time and care may be needed.

The performance level of each competency on the student portfolio checklist can be measured in one of three levels:

- 3 = Proficient—able to perform entry-level skills independently
- 2 = Intermediate—has performed tasks; however, may need additional training or supervision
- 1 = Introductory—is familiar with process but is unable or has not had the opportunity to perform tasks with entry-level skills. Additional training is required.

A workplace mentor observes and rates each of the competencies on the student portfolio checklist and discusses the results with the student and teacher-coordinator. Assessment procedures for a workplace mentor are explained under the Work-Based Learning Overview.

The cumulative rating of skills will determine if the student has gained sufficient proficiency to earn a state certificate. Students achieving a proficiency rating of 2 or 3 on at least 90 percent of the competencies **in each area** on the student portfolio checklist are eligible for a state certificate.

3. Establishing industry-based quality assurances that provide portability of the skill credential

Local school districts that implement certified co-op must maintain a level of quality assurance that industry can support.

Submitting information to the state system for accountability and data collection for this program is the school district's responsibility. The cycle for implementation and data collection for local school districts is described in this guide.

Business and industry involvement is essential to both certified co-op delivery and the identification and assessment of industry-based skill standards.

Students completing the certified co-op certification will be issued a state-endorsed certificate from the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, which represents proof of completion. This certificate may also be endorsed by supporting industry and education organizations thus enhancing a student's future workplace portfolio.

Program Design

With the exception of the Youth Leadership Certificate, Wisconsin's certified co-op provides junior or senior high school students with paid work experience, which contributes substantially to their educational and occupational development. The student's experience is divided between classroom instruction related to the applied work and workplace learning.

Each student's workplace learning includes an introduction to all aspects of an industry, thus ensuring a broad perspective on career opportunities within the industry. The workplace gives students opportunities to achieve both employability skills and technical competencies on the student portfolio checklist.

The competencies on the student portfolio checklist, which students must achieve for certification, are industry-based and approved by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI). The competencies are measured on the job by the workplace mentor and in school by the teacher-coordinator and other staff.

To meet program needs, the school furnishes classroom facilities, reference materials, teaching aids, workplace-mentor training, and a teacher-coordinator. Local business and industry establishments provide on-site work experiences for the students, collaboration time with a teacher-coordinator, a workplace mentor, and an assessment of competencies on the student portfolio checklist.

The certificate earned by the student is issued by the State of Wisconsin and becomes a part of the student's portfolio. Monitored and evaluated by the teacher-coordinator and the workplace mentor, the student portfolio contains a performance record for both the work experience and the related classroom instruction.

School districts implementing Wisconsin's certified co-op must register online and sign off on program assurances in order to operate the program. The current registration procedures can be found at: <https://dpi.wi.gov/cte/skills-standards/certificates>.

A district's certified co-op includes the following:

- The competencies listed on the student portfolio checklist
- Two semesters of related classroom instruction integrating employability skills
- Paid work experience under the supervision of a workplace mentor for an average of 15 hours per week (minimum of 480 hours total)
 - EXCEPTION: Youth Leadership Certificate for paid experience
 - EXCEPTION: Employability Skills for minimum hours
- Career planning and placement based on the student's academic and career plan and abilities
- Successful completion (proficiency rating of 3 or 2) of at least 90 percent of the competencies outlined on the applicable student portfolio checklist

Local Program Eligibility

To participate in a certified co-op, each school district must approve the program assurances in the DPI CTE Skills Registration software application at the beginning of the each school year prior to registering students. High schools then register the appropriately licensed teachers individually **for each content area** (Agriculture and Natural Resources, Business and Information Technology, Family and Consumer Education, Marketing Education and Technology and Engineering). High schools must agree to the following requirements:

1. The program is operated by the local school district in partnership with a business or industry.
2. Students are placed with employers for paid work experience in accordance with their abilities, aptitudes, and career objectives in their academic and career plan (ACP). The student selection process is fair, equitable, addresses the needs of all student populations, and adheres to all state and federal laws.
3. The related classroom instruction curriculum is rigorous in providing opportunities to achieve the competencies listed in the student portfolio checklist.
 - Students attend related class(es) that provide the following:
 - Instruction in employment skills related to the world of work, which includes instruction in basic skills, personal and interpersonal skills, thinking and information processing skills, and relationships of systems and technology

- Instruction on the knowledge and technical skills directly related to the occupation(s) that is the focus of the cooperative placement
 - Fifteen hours of safety instruction related to the worksite
- The related class(s) must meet for the duration of the program for at least the same number of minutes as any other classes receiving credit.
4. An individualized training plan, which outlines the major competencies a student learns on the job and in the related classroom instruction (see School-Based Learning Overview).
 5. A State-Certified Cooperative Education Training Agreement is developed among the school, employer, parent/guardian, and student. It states when and under what conditions the participants agree to take part in the student's learning efforts (see sample at <https://dpi.wi.gov/acp/work-based-learning>).
 6. A student works an average of 15 hours per week in order to experience the whole cycle of a work week. A minimum of 480 hours of continuous employment is required to introduce the student to all aspects of the business or industry.
 7. A business and industry advisory committee with expertise related to the program is required. This committee may serve as a larger district education for employment committee.
 8. The teacher-coordinator must be DPI-certified (licensed) in the content area of the program and be trained in methods of cooperative education (see also Overcoming Barriers to Program Implementation below).
 9. Each approved teacher-coordinator is assigned a sufficient amount of time during the daily schedule to supervise and coordinate the program, i.e., one full class period time of coordination per day per 12 students or 20 minutes per week per student. In addition, it is recommended that teacher-coordinators have extended contracts of at least one week to aid in developing new work sites and related program improvement work.
 10. A workplace mentor is required to provide necessary supervision and training of the student while employed. The approved teacher-coordinator is responsible for coordinating the learning activities of the workplace with the workplace mentor.

Responsibilities of the Local Partners

In developing Wisconsin's certified co-op, all partners understand the expectations and accept the responsibilities defined below.

The student:

- Cooperates with the workplace mentor and teacher-coordinator, engages in the work as a learning experience, observes business etiquette, and abides by safety rules
- Notifies the school and business in advance when absence is unavoidable
- Performs at an academic level that maintains eligibility for the certified co-op experience.

- Furnishes the teacher-coordinator with requested information and completes all necessary reports
- Shows honesty, punctuality, courtesy, a cooperative attitude, proper health and grooming habits, appropriate dress, and a willingness to learn
- Remains with the employer during the agreement period except by mutual agreement of all parties involved to end the experience
- Abides by the rules and regulations of the cooperating employer
- Keeps all business information of the cooperating employer confidential

The cooperating employer:

- Provides activities that contribute to the achievement of the required competencies on the student portfolio checklist
- Provides a workplace mentor who will observe and assess the education and proficiency of the student at the workplace
- Serves on the local advisory committee
- Provides employment for the student during the agreed times
- Adheres to all federal and state regulations regarding applicable child labor laws

The parent(s) or guardian(s):

- Provides transportation for the student to and from the place of employment. Exceptions may be necessary for students in special populations
- Provides time to meet with the teacher-coordinator
- Educates themselves on the purposes and procedures of the training plan
- Provides encouragement and assistance to ensure their child receives the maximum benefit from the certified co-op experience

The teacher-coordinator:

- Cooperates with and assists the employer in creating a training plan to meet the needs of the student and employer based on the student portfolio checklist
- Observes and assesses the student in school according to the training plan
- Cooperates with the employer in evaluating the student. Final evaluation using the student portfolio checklist is the responsibility of both the teacher-coordinator and the workplace mentor
- Makes every attempt to resolve problems that arise from the business, school, parent/guardian, student, or community
- Provides meaningful school-based learning related to the needs of the student and employer
- Assesses the employability skills identified in the student portfolios checklist
- Works with a local advisory committee to maintain a quality program
- Provides and promotes supporting activities, such as student organizations, advisory committees, community activities and other co-curricular activities that contribute to the achievement of competencies on the student portfolio checklist

Overcoming Barriers to Program Implementation

While investigating the potential of offering one or more certified co-ops, it may be necessary to explore alternative models if your district identifies the following specific issues or others:

- Teacher certification/licensure
- Low student enrollment

In these cases, the local school district should communicate with the related DPI program consultant in the problem-solving process.

Teacher Certification/Licensure

The approved teacher-coordinator for a certified co-op holds a specific DPI vocational teaching certification/license. This license requires related work experience hours and two specific courses.

The vocational teaching license is required for advanced-level high school courses that prepare students for related employment and/or advanced postsecondary education. This requirement is an assurance that the approved teacher-coordinator has both the theoretical and practical knowledge related to the industry for which they are preparing students. The practical experience also helps the teacher-coordinator to communicate more effectively with industry personnel and students in both the school-based and work-based phases of the certified co-op.

Certified Co-Op Program	Vocational Teaching License Number
Agriculture/Agribusiness	210, 285
Business	281, 285
Childcare Assistant Child Care Teacher (ACCT)/Infant-Toddler	211
Food Service	213
IT	281
Marketing	281, 285
Employability Skills Certificate	Any DPI-licensed teacher
Youth Leadership Certificate	Any DPI-licensed teacher

Given district time constraints, licensed classroom teachers may not be able to fulfill these functions alone; however, the following strategies may be implemented to meet the intent of the certified co-op program requirements.

Alternative strategies:

- *Explore alternative pathways to teacher emergency or vocational licensure.* See <https://dpi.wi.gov/licensing/pathways-licensure> for current pathways to licensure. Again, early in the investigative process, the teacher should discuss their situation with the appropriate DPI program consultant.
- *Develop a teaching team among multiple high schools.* If you can establish a working relationship with a neighboring high school, you can team a certified teacher-coordinator with

one or more non-certified teachers. The approved teacher-coordinator assumes responsibilities for setting up and coordinating the school-based and the work-based components of the certified co-op. The non-certified teachers are responsible for the daily classroom and work experience interaction with the students. These non-certified teachers must have designated time to work as a team with the certified teacher-coordinator who is approved to meet student needs and program requirements.

- *Develop a teaching team within a high school.* As with the previous strategy, this alternative is used when the certified approved teacher-coordinator does not have the license required for the certified co-op, but another teacher in the department does. In this situation, the certified approved teacher-coordinator assumes responsibility for setting up and coordinating the school-based and the work-based components of the certified co-op. The noncertified teacher is responsible for the related classroom instruction. Noncertified teachers must have designated time to work as a team with the certified approved teacher-coordinator to meet student needs and program requirements.
- *Develop a teaching team within a CESA.* Similar to the previous two strategies, by establishing a working relationship with a CESA and high schools within the CESA, you can team a certified approved teacher-coordinator with one or more noncertified teachers. In cooperation with the local schools and the DPI program area consultant, the CESA coordinates the certified co-op program. Again, in this situation, the certified approved teacher-coordinator assumes responsibility for setting up and coordinating the school-based and the work-based components of the certified co-op. Non-certified teachers are responsible for the related classroom instruction. These noncertified teachers must have some designated time to work as a team with the certified approved teacher-coordinator to meet student needs and program requirements.

Low Student Enrollment

The second issue often identified by local high schools is insufficient enrollment to warrant a specific class. Again, local districts can meet a few students' needs through more individualized programs.

Alternative strategies:

- *Adapt the strategies identified above under certification/licensure.* These ideas may be adapted to meet student enrollment concerns.
- *Introduce students to the certified co-op requirements in introductory and sequence courses.* The student's proficiency on various competencies within the student portfolio checklist can be monitored during these classes.
- *An approved teacher-coordinator can help individual junior- and/or senior-level students establish independent classroom and work experience opportunities.* These students report to the certified approved teacher-coordinator's room during one class period each day to receive individual assistance.

School-Based Learning Overview

Three components are necessary to effectively implement a certified co-op:

- School-based learning
- Work-based learning
- Connecting activities

All are essential. The teacher-coordinator coordinates the instruction and student learning that make up these components.

Related school-based learning refers to formal “in-school” instruction that correlates with the planned work experience, both of which shape the student’s career choice into a marketable skill. In order for the certified co-op program to be effective, the cooperative education experience must be considered as part of the overall career pathway according to the student’s ACP for postsecondary transition. The school-based learning component becomes part of the career pathway sequence of courses.

<p>School-based Learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Career development through the district ACP process ◆ Identification of a career major ◆ Integration of academics and CTE ◆ Evaluation systems ◆ Secondary/postsecondary partnerships
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Related Classroom Instruction

Certified co-op experiences have a classroom instruction component. The delivery of the requirement may vary from school to school, but all must maintain the following conditions:

- Employability skills are taught.
- Two semesters of related classroom instruction are provided.
- The teacher-coordinator is DPI-certified in the instructional area they are supervising.
- A local advisory committee helps plan and assess the program.
- Appropriate safety instruction is provided prior to placing a student at a worksite.

Academic and the career pathway sequence of CTE courses support the classroom instruction component. While technical and employability skills are delivered through the certified co-op experience, integrated and applied curriculum add value by reinforcing the content and application in a variety of learning settings.

Selection of Students

The work-based learning experience is the responsibility of the teacher-coordinator together with the student and the employer. In addition to securing the workplace, the teacher-coordinator

weighs the student's goals and abilities to find a workplace match that meets the student's career preference.

The teacher-coordinator includes an interview between the student and employer; however, a workplace assignment is ultimately decided by the teacher-coordinator and the employer. Approval from the parent/guardian and workplace mentor is required before the student is placed.

The selection process should not eliminate problem students or allow only high-ability students to enroll in the program. Rather, a certified co-op is a way to serve all student populations based on the student's ACP. The only restriction on the number of students in the program is availability and suitability of workplaces and classroom facilities.

Agreements

A State-Certified Cooperative Education Training Agreement (agreement) must be developed among the school, employer, parent/guardian, and student. It states when and under what conditions the participants agree to take part in the student's learning efforts (see sample at <https://dpi.wi.gov/acp/work-based-learning>). This sample outlines the required elements of training agreements for school-supervised, work-based learning programs.

The agreement is a written statement of the commitment each of the partners brings to the learning program, i.e., the student, employer, parent/guardian, and teacher-coordinator. Each partner signs and receives a copy of the agreement.

Students who are employed outside of a certified co-op are like any other employee and have little or no basis for receiving academic credit for their experience. A certified co-op derives its integrity through state-approved, industry-based skill standards and an agreement.

Training Plan

Unlike a State-Certified Cooperative Education Training Agreement, a training plan (plan) specifies the school-based and work-based learning that is offered to the student. The plan correlates the related classroom instruction with the learning experiences at the workplace. It also organizes the learning into a logical sequence based upon competencies on the student portfolio checklist and the student's ACP goals.

The ultimate responsibility for developing the plan rests with the teacher-coordinator and the workplace mentor. However, the student also has a role in developing the plan because it serves as a guide to *all* parties involved in the certified co-op experience.

Work itself does not justify school credit. A certified co-op derives its integrity from combining work-based learning and academic instruction in a manner that develops marketable skills in a career area chosen by the student.

Experiencing all areas of the competencies on the student portfolio checklist is important. Students who perform the same tasks once they have been learned are not developing the occupational competencies necessary for career development. The participating employer should

offer a variety of work experiences that allow learning to progress from the simple to the complex and culminate in an understanding of all aspects of the industry.

The teacher-coordinator familiarizes the employer with the content of the related class. The plan specifies the objectives and teaching strategies of work-based and school-based learning, allowing the employer and workplace mentor to understand the comprehensive nature of a certified co-op.

A procedure for developing a training plan from the student portfolio checklist is identified below:

1. Identify the tasks and competencies on the student portfolio checklist that are observable in the workplace.
2. Identify the tasks and competencies that are used to evaluate the student for each grading period based on related classroom instruction and the needs of the workplace mentor.
3. Develop an individualized training plan for each student based on the competencies on the student portfolio checklist. Connect workplace tasks and classroom tasks directly to identified competencies.
4. Give the student a copy of the training plan tasks and competencies and the student portfolio checklist for which he/she is responsible during the grading period.

Research findings have shown that when students know what they are responsible for achieving, they perform better. Therefore, be explicit about on-the-job expectations so students can focus on learning and performing those tasks. If possible, when the teacher coordinator and workplace mentor finalize the training plan and student portfolio checklist, invite the student to review it as well.

Granting High School Credit

Credit must be granted by the high school for the certified co-op experience. Follow district guidelines concerning the number of credits that will apply toward graduation for each of the school-based and work-based learning components.

However, credit for certified co-op should be granted only under the following conditions:

- * The student is working in an area directly related to the program in which the student is enrolled.
- * The student completes job-related assignments in the program at an acceptable level.
- * Workplace experience is the result of a detailed training plan determined by the teacher-coordinator, the workplace mentor, and the student.
- * The student's certified co-op experience is systematically evaluated by the teacher-coordinator and workplace mentor using the student portfolio checklist.

Districts are encouraged to develop appropriate credit arrangements (articulation agreements) with postsecondary institutions to ensure a smooth transition from one level to another without experiencing delays, course duplications, or loss of credits. Consider these arrangements in the

planning stages of implementation to better assess the necessary school-based and work-based activities that would support articulated competencies with postsecondary institutions.

Student Assessment Based on the Training Plan and Student Portfolio Checklist

Assessment of the student's performance during each grading period must be based on the training plan developed by the partners from the student portfolio checklist. A procedure for student assessment is described below.

The teacher-coordinator and the workplace mentor are responsible for the following:

- 1. Assess student progress during each grading period on the individualized training plan tasks and competencies derived from the student portfolio checklist.**

Working together, the workplace mentor and the teacher-coordinator evaluate the student's performance for each task and competency identified in the training plan derived from the student portfolio checklist. For tasks that receive a low rating, the workplace mentor identifies specific areas for improvement and suggests ways the student can improve. For tasks that receive high marks, the workplace mentor may give examples that illustrate outstanding performance. The workplace mentor and the student sign the training plan and keep a copy.

Students may master some tasks and competencies at both the workplace and classroom sites. Additional tasks and competencies to master during the next grading period are determined and a new training plan is developed.

During the assessment process, it is important to allow students the opportunity to reflect on and self-assess their progress.

- 2. Communicate assessment results to the student.**

The teacher-coordinator and the workplace mentor meet with the student to discuss the evaluation. This includes identifying areas that need improvement, sharing the workplace mentor's suggestions for improvement, noting strengths on the job and in the classroom, and providing evidence to support the evaluation of tasks and competencies on the student portfolio checklist.

Draft a new individualized training plan and ask the student to sign. Give the student a copy of the tasks and competencies on the student portfolio checklist identified for the next grading period, and discuss with the student.

- 3. Continue the evaluation process.**

For each assessment period established by the school, the teacher-coordinator, working with the student and workplace mentor, repeat this process.

- 4. Complete the evaluation process.**

To earn a certificate in a certified co-op, the student must receive a proficiency rating of 3 or 2 on 90 percent of the competencies **in each area** of the student portfolio checklist. Students falling behind at the end of each grading period should receive additional support or assistance in skill development.

High school credit **must** be issued for the certified co-op experience. The workplace mentor is responsible for assessing and documenting student achievement of competencies on the student portfolio checklist on the job but is **not** responsible for evaluating the student for high school credit.

Upon completion of the program, the teacher-coordinator, the workplace mentor, and the student will sign the final completion copy of the student portfolio checklist. The teacher-coordinator will enter the student's final score from the student portfolio checklist into the DPI CTE Skills Registration software application in order to print the certificate. Keep a final copy of the student's portfolio checklist and certificate for district records and give the original copies to the student.

Program Assessment

A business/industry advisory committee consisting of local employers, parents, labor representatives, and educators serve as a positive planning and assessment tool for certified co-op programs. A committee's consistent review and improvement of the certified co-op's policies and practices assist in the effectiveness and long-term implementation of the program.

There are many factors to consider in assessing certified co-op, including workplace sites, related classroom instruction, workplace mentors, teacher-coordinator performance, and student access and performance. Workplace sites, for example, are examined for their suitability as appropriate learning locations. Workplace mentors are evaluated on their willingness and ability to provide proper mentoring and learning for student youth. The teacher-coordinator, with support of the advisory committee, is responsible for these evaluations.

Likewise, the related classroom instruction objectives and curriculum must be evaluated by outside reviewers. This can be done through students, employers, advisory committees, and school administrators.

Students must also be evaluated on their performance on the job, in related classroom instruction, and in adherence to school- and work-based rules and regulations. The advisory committee determines the assessment tools and evaluation techniques so student performance can be measured for use in the classroom and is responsible for reporting student assessment/grades to the school as required.

And finally, program access and enrollment must be tracked, monitored, and evaluated. This helps measure enrollment trends, but also helps determine to what degree all students have access and what steps can be taken to ensure equity in the program.

Work-Based Learning Overview

“Learning by doing” is the foundation of work-based learning. Students must be provided the opportunity to participate in real workplace settings that assess the competencies on the student portfolio checklist. Work experience also supports the related classroom instruction and contextualizes learning.

Three components are necessary to effectively implement a certified co-op:

- School-based learning
- Work-based learning
- Connecting activities

All are essential. The teacher-coordinator and the workplace mentor are responsible for coordinating the instruction and student learning into a training plan, which is developed prior to the certified co-op experience.

Work-based learning on the job site and under the guidance of the workplace mentor develops the technical skills that are related to a student’s performance in entry-level employment. The strategies used in Wisconsin’s certified co-op program reinforce the school-based learning component by involving both educators and workplace mentors. Students demonstrate competencies learned in the classroom while performing tasks at the workplace. The workplace mentor is directly involved in training and assessing the student’s skill level.

Work-based Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ 21st century skills development◆ Work experience◆ Workplace mentoring◆ Technical competency◆ Instruction in all aspects of an industry
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Wisconsin’s certified co-op program sets expectations for workplace competency, teaching methods, and student assessment. Work-based learning requires the integration of academic content and technical skill development. In addition, employability skills are required components of the program.

Because the work-based learning component of this program is delivered outside the local school district, it is important that the local school work closely with the employer to establish the policies and procedures included in the State-Certified Cooperative Education Training Agreement.

Students, schools, and employers are required to follow all state and federal child labor regulations pertaining to work experience programs.

For more specific information on child labor laws and work experience programs, see the webpage at <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/er/laborstandards/workpermit/lawguide.htm> or contact the Equal Rights Division, Labor Standards Section, Department of Workforce Development, P. O. Box 8928, Madison, WI 53707-8928; or (608) 266-6860.

School Policies for Students in Work-Based Learning

Students are expected to follow local district and state program policies and rules for participating in the work-based learning component of a Wisconsin certified co-op.

1. A State-Certified Cooperative Education Training Agreement must be developed and signed by the school, employer, parent/guardian, and student (see sample at <https://dpi.wi.gov/acp/work-based-learning>).
2. Students are required to maintain wage and hour forms at school. The forms list hours worked and pay received. Students are responsible for keeping these forms up-to-date and for obtaining their workplace mentor's signature to verify the information.
3. Students are required to maintain a daily record of their work experiences.
4. If a problem occurs at the workplace, the student is responsible for contacting the teacher-coordinator immediately. The teacher-coordinator investigates the situation to resolve the problem.
5. Students work an average of 15 hours per week for the duration of the program (minimum of 480 hours).
6. Students are responsible for their own transportation to and from the workplace unless special arrangements are made through the local district. Transportation problems do not justify absence from work or school.
7. Students who are injured on the job must report the injuries to their workplace supervisor immediately and to the teacher-coordinator as soon as reasonably possible.
8. Absence from school means absence from work. Students may not, without permission from the teacher-coordinator, report to the workplace when absent from school.
9. Student employment must be coordinated with school-based learning.
10. If students become unemployed as a result of situations or conditions beyond their control, they will be assigned in-school simulated work experience during the period of unemployment.
11. Students who become unemployed as a result of poor performance on the job will be placed on probation and re-assigned, placed on in-school simulated work experience, or removed from the program.
12. Students who are removed from the workplace as the result of dishonesty of any kind will be removed from the program. Additional disciplinary action may be taken by the workplace and/or the school depending on the circumstances.
13. Written consent of the teacher-coordinator, employer, and family is necessary for a student to quit the work-based learning. Failure to follow this policy will result in a

student being placed on probation, on in-school work experience, or being removed from the program.

14. The student will follow the attendance policies of the school and the workplace.

Workplace Mentoring

Mentoring activities are those that support the needs of students by developing and maintaining a supportive relationship with an adult. The workplace mentor nurtures the students by helping them adjust to the culture of the workplace and orienting them to career options and pathways.

Mentoring programs provide a variety of useful functions for youth, both psychosocial and instrumental in nature. Exposing and socializing young people to the world of employment strengthens ties to the labor market, increases access to opportunities, develops the social skills of youth, and contributes to an atmosphere of cooperation and flexibility at the workplace.

The employer must agree to provide a mentor(s) for students at the workplace. A workplace mentor must be a skilled, experienced worker who can teach youth about the industry and the world of work. Workplace mentors are required to attend training on working with high school-aged youth and meet regularly with school personnel and parents/guardians.

The roles and responsibilities of the workplace mentor will vary from setting to setting, but the following are basic functions that all workplace mentors perform:

- * Introduce the student to the workplace culture—guiding young people into an adult social system with its own rules, conventions, and norms. This can include both formal and informal organizational structures.
- * Advise youth on career directions and opportunities, provide networking opportunities, and generally help expand the young person’s career goals.
- * Help the student to resolve practical problems—including personal difficulties encountered at work, at school, and with work-related issues.

Mentor training is required and is the responsibility of the local school district.

State-Certified Cooperative Education Options

School districts implementing Wisconsin's State-Certified Cooperative Education Program (certified co-op) must register online and sign off on program assurances in order to operate the program. The current registration procedures can be found at: <https://dpi.wi.gov/cte/skills-standards/certificates>.

To operate a certified co-op program, districts must be able to offer the following:

- The competencies on the student portfolio checklist
- Two semesters of related classroom instruction integrating employability skills
- Paid work experience under the supervision of a workplace mentor for an average of 15 hours per week (minimum of 480 hours total)
 - EXCEPTION: Youth Leadership Certificate for paid experience
 - EXCEPTION: Employability Skills Certificate for minimum hours
- Career planning and placement based on the student's academic and career plan and abilities
- Successful completion (proficiency rating of 3 or 2) of at least 90 percent of the competencies as outlined on the applicable student portfolio checklist

Youth Leadership Certificate

The Youth Leadership Certificate Program recognizes a student's mastery and demonstration of leadership skills valued by employers, communities, and organizations. The certificate is awarded by the State of Wisconsin and becomes a part of the student's portfolio and resume.

Key Program characteristics:

- A minimum of 90 hours accumulated over the course of high school
- Paid wages are not required

Examples of how to implement locally:

- Through a career and technical student organization
- Through a leadership course or student retreat that focuses on leadership skills
- Through volunteer work for a local nonprofit organization or company

To learn more, go to the state-certified Youth Leadership Certificate Program [webpage](#) on the DPI website.

Employability Skills Certificate

The Employability Skills Certificate Program recognizes a student's mastery of employability skills valued by employers in a variety of worksite settings while helping students explore career interests. The certificate is awarded by the State of Wisconsin and becomes a part of the student's portfolio and resume.

Key program characteristics:

- A minimum of 90 hours accumulated over the course of high school
- Paid wages are required

Examples of how to implement locally:

- Through placement at a community employer
- Through paid work in a family business
- Through a job at a local fast food restaurant
- Through paid work in a summer job

To learn more, go to the Employability Skills Certificate Program [webpage](#) on the DPI website.

Occupational Certificates

Wisconsin's State-Certified Cooperative Education Program (certified co-op) is designed in partnership with business, industry, labor representatives, and educators around the integration of school-based and work-based learning and appropriate career development experiences. The program is designed to provide junior and senior high school students with paid work experience, which contributes substantially to their educational and occupational development. Students learn technical tasks and employability skills validated by business and industry representatives in cooperation with high school, technical college, and university instructors. A teacher supervises this arrangement in one of the following areas: agriculture, business, family and consumer science, information technology, marketing, or technology education.

The student's job is matched with a career interest in one of these areas. The student also takes a high school course in the related area. This course may be eligible for transfer credits to a technical college or a four-year college.

The certified co-op encourages students to move through a series of learning activities with opportunities for career exploration, further learning, and employment skills based on state standards.

A student involved in certified skills co-op receives high school credit for the work experiences and for the related school class and a certificate of proficiency in the technical area.

Key program characteristics:

- A minimum of 480 hours in a calendar year
- Paid wages are required

Examples of how to implement locally:

- Through paid work on a family farm
- Through working in a daycare center
- Through placement at a community employer

To learn more, go to the State-Certified Cooperative Education programs [webpage](#) on the DPI website.

Assistant Child Care Teacher/Infant & Toddler Certificates

Wisconsin's Assistant Child Care Teacher and Infant/Toddler Certificate programs are a quality, high school, classroom and work-based training option designed to allow a student to work as an assistant child care teacher (ACCT) or a child care teacher (CCT) in a licensed child care center. Registry certification indicates successful completion of the DPI approved high school course(s) as well as verification of child care positions for which the qualifications have been met.

Key program characteristics:

- A minimum of 480 hours in a calendar year
- Paid wages are required

Examples of how to implement locally:

- Through a school-based licensed day care center
- Through partnership with a local licensed day care center

To learn more, go to the ACCT/IT Certificate Program [webpage](#) on the DPI website.