



FACT SHEET

Internship

An internship is a career preparation activity in which students are placed in a workplace for a defined period of time to participate in and observe work within a given industry. Internships are highly structured, time-limited experiences that occur at a worksite. Unlike work experience, internships often allow students to rotate through a number of departments and job functions. Internships may be paid or unpaid, depending on whether the student is performing productive work. They are designed to give students hands-on experience, providing them a deeper understanding of the occupation and industry.

Internships within the (School District Name) Public Schools include on-the-job internship programs supported by the career and technology education division in business, marketing, health careers and hospitality. Special education internships include work sample and work study. Within the small learning communities, career development internships are available for seniors. All internship programs in the district use the *Internship Plan and Evaluation* tool. See the *Program Fact Sheets* for more information about each of the internship opportunities in these programs.

Internships are designed to promote the following:

- Exploration of a field of interest.
- Exposure to careers and jobs.
- Building occupational knowledge and technical skills.

Success Factors

- Provide a classroom orientation and concurrent activities that support workplace learning.
- Obtain clear and specific information from the workplace partners about the expected projects and duties the intern will perform.
- Develop and use the internship plan and work-based learning contract that detail learning objectives and roles of all parties.
- Maintain ongoing communication with workplace partners.

Key Legal, Safety & Health Issues

- If the student is paid by the workplace, the employer is responsible for all wages and taxes as well as liability and workers' compensation coverage.
- If the school pays the student, the school district is responsible for all wages and taxes as well as liability and workers' compensation coverage.
- Interns should receive training about potential workplace hazards and how to protect themselves.
- Students participating in internship activities can participate in mock situations, shadow employees or even participate in the operations of the workplace as long as the person typically responsible for the duty is observing the students' actions. (US DOL Fact Sheet No. 013, Employment Relationship Under the Fair Labor Standards Act)