

# EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

## A Guide for Parents/Guardians

“Experiential learning can assist all students, including exceptional students, who are bound for university, college, apprenticeship, or the workplace, in making career decisions as well as in developing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are essential in today’s society.”

(Ministry of Education, 2000)

### ❖ What is Cooperative Education?

Cooperative education and other experiential learning opportunities provide students with the opportunity to earn high school credits in workplace settings. Combined with in-school hours and work placement experience, students are able to build-on and further develop skills related to chosen career choices.

### ❖ Why should you let your learner consider co-op?

Students who participate in cooperative education build on their interests by furthering their skills within a workplace setting. Students are able to learn the reality of the ‘working world’, developing the necessary job skills for successful transitions from high school to apprenticeship, college and/or university.

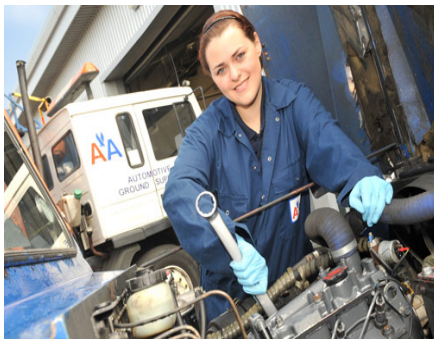
### ❖ Benefits:

- ✓ Students may earn compulsory secondary school credits while exploring possible careers
- ✓ Students gain knowledge in a chosen career field, with valuable hands-on experience
- ✓ Students improve resume and cover-letter building skills
- ✓ Students can network with employers, gaining valuable professional references
- ✓ Students can log coop hours towards a registered apprenticeship

### ❖ Who can participate?

Any student with a strong commitment to exploring a chosen career choice can participate. Our programs are open to students working towards a variety of post-secondary options including: apprenticeship, college, university or direct entry into the workplace.

**\* It is strongly recommended that students complete experiential learning in Grades 11 and/or 12 \***



## ❖ **The Cooperative Education Program:**

- Students participate in both an in-class pre-placement session, followed by a work placement.
- Co-op credits are linked to related school subjects through the development of a Personalized Placement Learning Plan (PPLP). This plan outlines how the learner's chosen work placement will enhance and build upon their already learned subject material.
  - Students spend the first 2-3 weeks learning skills for employability, how to present themselves within the workplace in a professional and marketable manner.
  - Students interview with chosen employer prior to placement start date.
  - Students become reflective practitioners as they complete weekly time logs and reflections.

## ❖ **Cooperative Education Expectations:**

- Students are expected to exhibit punctuality and regular attendance at their work placement (if absent, students should report to both their employer and co-op teacher as soon as possible) – all time lost must be completed upon return to placement.
- Students are expected to behave professionally within the workplace. Students are a representation of our employers' businesses, our school board and surrounding community.
- For one-credit and two-credit co-op placements, 110 hours and 220 hours must be completed, respectively.
- Our employers have the right to terminate students who are found responsible for theft and/or are frequently truant/absent. Students may not achieve their co-op credits if a situation such as this arises.

## ❖ **Workplace Safety & Insurance Board (WSIB) Coverage**

- Students and parents/guardians are required to sign Work Education Agreements which indicate coverage by WSIB for the co-op hours at work placement.
- If work placement hours begin to vary from initially agreed upon timelines, an amendment form must be completed and signed by employer, teacher, parent and student.

## ❖ **Transportation:**

- Students are responsible for their own transportation to and from the worksite (insurance is the responsibility of the vehicle owner)
- Students should not be asked to or volunteer to drive vehicles for placement business.
- If employers require that a student operate a motorized vehicle, the employer is responsible for both proper training and insurance.

## ❖ **Assessment & Evaluation:**

- Students are frequently visited by their co-op teacher while at work placement.
- Ongoing feedback written by both employer and teacher are provided to student throughout – the co-op teacher generates final grades.
- Final credits are received upon successful completion of work hours, curriculum material and summative tasks.

# EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

## **COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

Listed below are the programs currently being offered at every school in local school to find out more about the specific programs offered.

Contact your

### ☆ **REGULAR 2 & 4 CREDIT COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

### ☆ **ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATION**

Enables students to earn credits towards their graduation while working at their full or part-time job.

### ☆ **CONTINUOUS INTAKE COOPERATIVE EDUCATION**

This program allows students to enter the program throughout the school year.

### ☆ **SPECIALIST HIGH SKILLS MAJORS (SHSM)**

SHSMs are programs that bundle 8-10 credits and work experience in a variety of sectors. A minimum of two Cooperative Education credits are required and must be tied to the student's major credits.

### ☆ **ONTARIO YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM (OYAP)**

OYAP offers secondary school students the opportunity to train as registered apprentices while enrolled in school. It allows a student to complete his or her Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and to gain apprenticeship training towards a Certificate of Qualification with journey person status in a skilled trade.

### ☆ **ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION**

Regular day school students can earn up to 2 credits in a summer school Cooperative Education program. Various co-op programs are also available for adults (18 and over) at all of the Learning Centres.

### ☆ **MILITARY COOPERATIVE EDUCATION**

Students earn 4 credits as well as their Basic Military Qualification (BMQ) and Soldiers Qualification (SQ) with the Students must apply the year prior and go through the testing that all new recruits must complete to be accepted into the Reserves.

### ☆ **STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS**

Students may be integrated into a regular Cooperative Education Program or a Specialized Cooperative Education Program may be designed for students with special education needs. This type of program allows the Cooperative Education teacher to develop in-school classroom instruction and activities that are tailored to the specific needs of the students.

## **How to Apply:**

- See your Guidance Counsellor for a Cooperative Education Application Form
- Complete the Teacher Reference Form (obtain from a Guidance Counsellor)
- Undergo an interview with one of our co-op teachers