

Teacher in the Workplace

The Teacher in the Workplace pilot program was designed by the Winona Area Chamber of Commerce Business Education Networks Committee and funded through a grant managed by the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce. The program provides an opportunity for Winona High School faculty to take part in a paid summer industry immersion experience with two separate Winona area manufacturing companies. During each of the one week immersions teachers will be given or directly exposed to a work assignment that provides a meaningful experience based on the teacher's area of expertise. The first week will take place in June, with the second in July. Teachers will also receive a certificate, which upon district approval; can be applied towards professional development credit.

The Teacher

Program Objective:

Teachers will identify, describe, and translate their experiences from workplace to the classroom, with the goal of better articulation between industry and classroom skills.

Teachers will address the following questions in a short answer format at the completion of their immersion:

- What factors do you believe might influence a student's choice for electing to pursue a career in manufacturing?
- What do you feel might be the reasons students reject a career in manufacturing?
- What barriers do you feel might keep students from choosing a career in manufacturing?
- How might you in your classroom create a learning experience that would open doors into a career in manufacturing for underserved students?
- How can you motivate your students to think and believe they can become manufacturing professionals?
- List three things that you learned while immersed that will help you in the classroom.
- How might you share what you have learned with others at Winona High School?

Workplace observations and interviews:

We encourage you to make daily observations in your workplace on what you learned through both instruction and application. Consider interviewing your co-workers on their educational backgrounds, current position responsibilities, and past experiences that helped prepare them for the position they currently hold.

Finally, you will report to the BEN committee in September to share your experiences and explore ways on how we can maintain and strengthen the pilot program.

The Business

Businesses will need to prepare an orientation summary including a procedural outline of rules, regulations and safety guidelines.

Businesses need to identify one week for complete immersion in which a teacher would be given or directly exposed to a work assignment that provides a meaningful experience in the teacher's area of expertise.

Businesses are encouraged to involve teachers in every aspect of production from research and development to the shipping of the final product.

Businesses should identify and communicate problematic aspects with hiring, training, promoting, and retaining of employees.

Businesses can elect to pay teachers directly and be reimbursed by the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce or elect to have them paid directly by the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce.

The Winona Chamber of Commerce Business and Education Networks Committee will provide support for teachers and businesses during the duration of the assignment.

The Outcomes

Teachers will gain valuable industry experience that can directly impact teaching and learning opportunities within the classroom.

Teachers will learn about local manufactures and will be better prepared to teach students about local workforce needs.

Businesses will gain valuable feedback from experienced teachers who can provide meaningful contributions to the workplace.

Businesses will gain a better understanding of what is being taught in the classroom and to have a direct influence on future curriculum development.

This is a pilot program and thus a learning experience for all involved. The expectation from this pilot is that we will operate on a continuous learning and improvement model making immersion more beneficial for both businesses and teachers.