

WORK STUDY PROGRAMS

Background

Experiential learning opportunities such as those in Career and Work Exploration and PAA have evolved, driven by employment trends, Labour Market Information (LMI), industry expectations, student needs, and public demand. Transition-to-Work programs have increased and have expanded to cover a broader scope. Awareness of the local labour market and access to labour market information is important. Those entering the work force for the first time require a multiplicity of well-honed skills and abilities to cope with change. Collaboration and cooperation between business and education result in mutual benefit to both sectors. Care needs to be taken to ensure that contracts, training plans, and monitors are in place to protect all parties involved and to maximize the benefits of the program.

Career and Work Exploration - A 2002 Saskatchewan Education curriculum offering in which students learn about work rather than receive training in a specific occupation. This series of optional courses within the PAA provides students the opportunity to be placed at a variety of work sites. Students enrolling in Career and Work Exploration increase career awareness, practice career exploration, and gain workplace experience while developing generic employability skills. See Saskatchewan Learning's renewed *Career and Work Exploration 10, 20, A30, B30 Curriculum Guidelines (2002)*.

Job Shadow - This is a career exploration activity in which a student shadows an employed worker to learn more about his or her job. This activity is integrated into such courses as Life Transitions, Middle Level Career Guidance, or other PAA courses. The *Take Our Kids to Work Program* is an example of a job shadow activity for students in grade 9. One day placements such as *Take Our Kids to Work* are not included under the agreement with the Workers' Compensation Board.

Mentoring - This involves pairing students with adults in the community to support learning about work or other issues related to career development. Often this activity takes place beyond the regular school day and is a partnership established with a goal of sustainability beyond the course or class in which it was established. Mentoring requires the committed involvement of community adults willing to work with students on a continuing basis during working hours and beyond. Mentoring for the *Skills Canada Saskatchewan* competition is an example. 53

Procedures

1. Career and Work Exploration Courses and any other PAA Courses with Work Study components (See AP 217-1) may be offered if the Principal and the Superintendent of Education are assured that the following conditions have been met:

- School personnel have researched the factors required in order to implement such a program;

- Opportunities for suitable work placement exist within the community;
- The teacher coordinator will have the necessary time and assistance to plan with students and parents, to contact and explain the program to potential work placement supervisors, to perform work site monitoring, documentation and evaluation;
- The program complies with provincial guidelines for registration for Workers' Compensation and Liability Insurance, and with any union agreements that may affect a particular workplace.

Consult the following references.

1. Workers' Compensation Agreement.
 2. Business-Education Partnerships - Ethical Guidelines (See the Department's *Saskatchewan Partnerships* document).
 3. Relevant legislation affecting work experience education.
 - *Occupational Health and Safety Act*
 - *Labour Standards Act*
- Trade Union Act