

# Cooperative Education (CO-OP)

## Octorara Area High School

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### **Course Description:**

The Cooperative Education (CO-OP) program combines classroom instruction with on-the-job training, and is available through any career and technical program offered at OACTEP. Qualifying seniors integrate classroom learning with supervised, practical work experience. Eligible students apply for part-time employment in areas related to their chosen field of study. Students are evaluated by their employers on a monthly basis, and receive related instruction in school each week. To qualify for the CO-OP program, students must have passing grades in all courses required for graduation, have a Student Employment Training Agreement, have good attendance, and have an acceptable discipline record. Students must have completed a minimum of one year in their career and technical program prior to applying for the CO-OP program.

The Cooperative Education (CO-OP) is a partnership between the high school, local employers and students. CO-OP is an opportunity for students to use skills learned in high school and learn new skills in the workplace. Students are required to keep a log of work activities and attend the CO-OP class. Students are evaluated monthly by employers and have a *Training Plan* developed in conjunction with their employer. All students will be required to take the appropriate NOCTI test at the conclusion of the program.

### **Course Objectives:**

1. To provide students the opportunity to acquire vocational skills "on the job" as they complete requirements for a high school diploma.
2. To process with students the occupational competencies gained through experience.
3. To enable students to explore career options.
4. To assist students in preparing for a career after high school.

### **Eligibility:**

1. The student must be **passing** all courses required for graduation to be enrolled in CO-OP.
2. The student must have a *Student Employment Training Agreement* **completed and on file**.
3. The student must maintain a 95% attendance at the high school and have an acceptable discipline record.
4. Have **completed all portfolio requirements by the beginning of the 2nd semester** of the senior year.

### **Placement in CO-OP:**

1. The student must meet with his/her school counselor to discuss credit requirements to determine eligibility and have CO-OP placed on the student's schedule request form.
2. Students who meet the basic criteria for CO-OP and who have completed a schedule request, will be sent a *Student Employment Training Agreement* completed by the student, parent(s), and employer.
3. The student must meet with the prospective employer to review expectations and requirements.
4. The student, employer, and parent must complete and sign the *Student Employment Training Agreement* and return it to the course instructor.
5. The high school Principal and CO-OP Coordinator will review the student's completed *Student Employment Training Agreement*, report card, attendance record, and discipline records. The CO-OP Coordinator will notify students of acceptance into the CO-OP program. **Students will NOT be permitted to participate in**

### **CO-OP**

**until the *Student Employment Training Agreement* is on file and has been signed by the high school Principal**

**The Student is Responsible for:**

1. Interviewing and acquiring employment that relates to the students' career objective. (The CO-OP Coordinator may assist by providing job leads for students if needed.)
2. Completing the CO-OP work record on a weekly basis providing truthful and accurate information. **Students will turn in the record pages once a week for grading. Record books that are late will be reduced one letter grade for each day late. Record books turned in more than one week late will be given a zero. Record books that are not verified by the supervisor will not be accepted.**
3. Attending, completing assignments, and participating in the CO-OP class. The class meets weekly or biweekly based on the instructor's schedule.
4. Cooperating with the employer and conforming to normal working hours and following all guidelines, procedures, and rules of the workplace.
5. Informing the CO-OP Coordinator of any changes in employment status. **Students, who lose jobs or have a change of status, must complete a new *Student Employment Training Agreement* to have on file with the Coordinator within 10 school days or they will be dropped from the program. The high school Principal may listen to extenuating circumstances and make a final decision.**
6. All students are required to take the appropriate end-of-the-year NOCTI test. Students, who score at the "Advanced" level on the NOCTI and pass the CO-OP course, will be awarded the *Pennsylvania Skills Certificate*.

**The CO-OP Coordinator Responsibilities:**

1. Assist students having difficulty finding employment or other problems in the workplace.
2. Assign grades for students as a result of record book activity and employer evaluations.
3. Work with the employer and student to develop a *Training Plan*.
4. Make periodic (monthly) visits to the worksite during the course of the school year to discuss student progress, review the *Training Plan* and complete the supervisor evaluations with the employer.

**The Employer Responsibilities:**

1. Provide a safe working environment for the student in accordance with all rules and regulations as provided by the Department of Labor and Industry of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the US Department of Labor.
2. Provide innovative and creative ways for the student to use his/her talents and skills as much as possible.
3. Provide learning experiences, training, and safety instruction for the student learner.
4. Complete an evaluation of the student monthly.
5. Notify the CO-OP Coordinator immediately of any problems or concerns about the student in the workplace.
6. Work with the CO-OP Coordinator and student to develop a *Training Plan*.
7. Any employer who participates in a work-based opportunities program (CO-OP, internship, externship) with any public or non-public school student, must have one (1) "supervisor" (an employee responsible for the student's welfare while with the employer) obtain three clearances from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the federal government - (State Police Clearance, Child Abuse Clearance and FBI Fingerprint Clearance/Waiver).

**Grading Criteria:**

1. Three criteria will be used to determine grades for CO-OP. They include the work record book, class assignments, and employer evaluations.
2. Record books will be graded on a **weekly basis**. At the end of the marking period, the weekly grades will be averaged. The criteria for grading include: completeness, accuracy, and legibility. **Record Book pages that are not verified by the employer will not be accepted.**
3. The CO-OP Coordinator will give an Employer Evaluation form to employers monthly. The employer will be asked to send it back to the course instructor or it can be completed during the monthly visit.

**Training Plans:**

Each student in the CO-OP program will have a *Training Plan*. The student's supervisor, the CO-OP Coordinator and the student develop training plans. *Training Plans* are individually developed for each student and can be changed over the course of the school year as the student masters skills and develops new skills.

**Probation Status:**

Students enrolled in Cooperative Education who have failing grades, excessive number of absences or late arrivals to school, or have discipline problems, will be placed on "probation" for up to one marking period. If improvement is not made by the end of the following marking period, the student may be dropped from the course (with a final grade of "F") and given whatever courses are available at the time. **Students who are dropped from CO-OP risk not having enough credits for graduation!**

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Employer/Training sites and schools of cooperative education students shall not discriminate in educational programs, activities, or employment practices based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, ancestry, union membership or any other legally protected classification. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with state and federal laws including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

The Octorara Area School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs or activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Inquiries may be directed to Jeff Curtis, Title XI Coordinator or the Section 504 Coordinator, Kathryn Michalowski at 228 Highland Road, Suite 1, Atglen, PA 19310 or 610-593-8238.