

## **Cooperative Education Program Criteria**

### **Purpose**

The Cooperative Education Program is both a school-based and a work-based program. Co-op students will continue to receive their academic training in a traditional classroom setting. However, during the students' shop (practical) week, they will be employed by area businesses. Students will perform work that is best suited to their qualifications and educational needs. Employers will evaluate the student's progress. Prior to employment the evaluation process will be agreed upon between the employer and Northeast. Co-op students must meet Northeast's prerequisites before entering the program. Students will receive no less than minimum wage from their employer, with the exception of those industries not covered by the minimum wage law.

**Students must meet the following requirements before they are eligible for cooperative education:**

### **Grades**

**Juniors** - Must maintain an overall grade point average of 80% in their Career / Technical area (shop), and an overall grade point average of 70% in all academics, including related class, for the first three quarters of junior year, or have an overall grade point average of 80% in their Career/Technical area (shop), and an overall grade point average 70% in all academics including related class cumulatively, to be eligible for the cooperative education program 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of their junior year. Co-op juniors must maintain this grade point average for their 4<sup>th</sup> quarter to remain on co-op the first quarter of their senior year. The student's overall grade point average **cannot** include a failing grade for the current quarter. All students must complete required shop and Career Center competencies to be eligible for the program.

**Seniors** - **Must** maintain an overall grade point average of an 80% in their Career / Technical area (shop), and an overall grade point average of 70% in all academics, including related class, **each quarter**, to remain eligible for the co-op program senior year, or have an overall grade point average of 80% in their Career / Technical area (shop), and an overall grade point average of 70% in all academics, including related class cumulatively, to remain in the program. The student's overall grade point average **cannot** include a failing grade for the current quarter. While on Co-op, a failing grade will cause a student to be withdrawn from the program. All students must complete required shop and Career Center competencies to remain in the program. An Incomplete grade, or an MX grade, could make a student ineligible for the program, but could be reviewed on a case by case basis. At the end of a marking period, student eligibility will be considered as official only on the date when report cards for that ranking period have been issued to the student.

**Note:** In accordance with Federal Law and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, school personnel will work to overcome barriers which would prohibit homeless students from involvement in this program.

## **Suspension**

The Co-op student must be suspension free (in or out of school) for ten (10) full school weeks. Ten (10) full school weeks equates to one educational quarter.

## **Absences and Tardies**

**Juniors** - Cannot exceed more than three (3) days absent, three (3) days tardy, and/or three (3) dismissals per quarter in order to qualify for the Cooperative Education program 4th quarter of their Junior year. If a junior exceeds more than three (3) absences, three (3) days tardy, and/or three (3) dismissals in the 4th quarter they will be withdrawn from the program. Juniors cannot have more than twelve (12) absences, twelve (12) days tardy, and/or twelve (12) dismissals by the end of their junior year to qualify for the Cooperative education program first quarter of their senior year. **This rule may be waived in the case of a serious illness, hospitalization, etc. or at the discretion of the Principal.**

**Seniors** - If a senior exceeds more than three (3) absences, three (3) tardies, and/or three (3) dismissals in a quarter they will be considered ineligible for the cooperative education program, or be withdrawn from the program. **This rule may be waived in the case of a serious illness, hospitalization, etc. or at the discretion of the Principal. All Co-op students must telephone and notify their Co-op employer, Department Head, and the Co-op Coordinator if they are unable to report for work for any reason.**

Administration – Reserves the right to deny or withdraw any student from the Co-op program for reasons they deem good cause.

## **Wages**

Determined by industry standards for the position. Must be at least minimum wage. The minimum wage standard is waived for those industries not covered by the minimum wage law, i.e. service.

## **Hours**

Hours of employment will be governed by state statute for any and all industries. A Co-op position can be for less than the accepted five (5) day work week. Hours will be determined daily, but must not exceed eight (8) hours per day under the Co-op agreement. Any overtime hours cannot interfere with the program.

## **Travel Time Allowed to a Co-op Job**

A student may work outside of the Northeast School District. However, travel time is not to exceed 30 minutes without prior approval from the Co-op Coordinator.

## **Approvals as Follows:**

1. Student/Parental or guardian (Cooperative Education Program Application)
2. Teacher's recommendation to Department Head (Academic/Vocational Approval)
3. Department Head (Academic/Vocational Approval)
4. Career Center (Competencies)
5. Guidance Counselor (Academic/Vocational Approval)
6. Dean of Students (Academic/Vocational Approval)
7. Cooperative Education Coordinator (Academic/Vocational Approval)

### **Eligible Students**

**Seniors** – Anytime during senior year.

**Juniors** – Fourth quarter junior year.

**All students must be employed in their Career / Technical Program of Study area.**

### **Are students under eighteen (18) eligible?**

Cooperative programs allow 16 and 17 year-Olds to be employed in otherwise prohibited work settings under the close supervision of qualified and experienced persons.

Cooperative Education students may obtain waivers from the following Hazardous Orders: numbers 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, and 17 through 24. \*A graduate of a vocational training program may be employed in an occupation in which training *has* been completed, regardless of age. Each Cooperative Education Placement must be supported by a written agreement which provides:

1. That the work of the student-learned in the occupations declared particularly hazardous must be incidental to the training;
2. That such work must be intermittent and for short periods of time, and under the direct and close supervision of a qualified and experienced person;
3. Safety instruction must be given in school and be integrated with on-the-job training;
4. Prior to being performed on the job, a schedule of organized and progressive work processes will be prepared. Minimum wage laws must be complied with, and the employer must be covered by Workers' Compensation Insurance.

Each Cooperative Education placement must be supported by a written agreement containing the name of the student and signed by the employer and school Co-op Coordinator or Principal. Copies should be kept on file by both the school and employer. The agreement may be revoked in situations

where reasonable precautions for the safety of the minors employed are not being observed. In general, all of the above programs are seen as expanding the educational opportunities and experiences of the students. They are not designed to provide economic benefit to participating employers, nor can they interfere with the hiring or promotion of regular employees.

A school committee of any city, town or regional school district may permit a minor over sixteen and under eighteen who is attending school to be employed in an industry without an educational certificate. However, the minor must be part of a cooperative work-study program operated by the school committee and approved by the Massachusetts Department of Education. The “COOPERATIVE EMPLOYMENT PERMIT”, may be issued to students in cooperative courses in public-day or vocational schools approved by the Massachusetts Department of Education. The permit is issued by the Coop Coordinator and must be signed by the minor in whose name the permit is issued. The permit is valid only while the minor is a regular attendant at a public day school.

The permit is to be retained by the employer during hours of employment but is to be returned to the minor at the expiration of the term of employment. If the pupil is assigned to two or more employers, the permit is to be transferred by the minor from one employer to another, when directed by the superintendent of schools. When the permit expires, it must be returned by the minor to the Office of Superintendent from which it was issued.

**\*Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

**Child Labor Laws in Massachusetts**

**Department of Labor and Industries**

**Division of Industrial Safety**

**The following must be on file before a student is employed:**

1. Completed Cooperative Education Program Application prepared by the student, and the parent or guardian. (**Cooperative Education Program Application**) Form #Coop F1
2. All necessary approvals, and signed by the Co-operative Coordinator. (**Academic/Vocational Approval**) Form #Coop F2
3. Letter of intent from employer stating job responsibilities, wages, and verification of Worker’s Compensation Insurance. (**Cooperative Agreement**) Form #Coop F3
4. Contract signed by the student, parent or guardian, employer, and Co-op Coordinator. (**Cooperative Education Program Contract**) Form #Coop F5
5. Signed Cooperative Employment Permit.
6. If under eighteen (18) all necessary labor laws must be adhered to before a student is allowed to participate in the Cooperative Education Program.
7. Copy of the student’s Social Security Card
8. Copy of the student’s driver’s license (where applicable)
9. Copy of the student’s ten (10) hour OSHA certificate.
10. Verification of student compensation received by employer.

**Employer's evaluation required for cooperative education program.**

- Weekly Cooperative Student Employment Record (*Weekly Co-op Student Employment Record*) Form must be returned to the Department Head on the day the student returns to school from his/her week of Co-op employment. The weekly Co-op Student Employment Record will be filed with all other student records that the Instructor and/or Department Head use to determine a student's grades and attendance. If the Co-op student does not return this document on the day he/she returns from their Co-op job he/she may be eliminated from the program
- Quarterly Employer evaluates cooperative education student (*Employer's Quarterly Evaluation of Cooperative Education Student*) Form must be returned to the Department Head on the day the student returns to school from his/her Co-op employment.
- **Cooperative Education Employment Journal** - Assigned written assignment handed in with time card.