Cooperative Education Policies and Procedures
Baldwin County Board of Education

Definition
Cooperative Education is a structured component of the Career and Technical Education curriculum that integrates classroom instruction with productive, progressive, supervised, work based experiences/apprenticeships (Paid) and internships (Unpaid), related to students’ career objectives. Content is planned for students through a cooperative arrangement between the school and employer as a component of work-based learning.

Purpose
The purpose of the Cooperative Education Program is to provide work-based experiences/apprenticeships (paid) or internships (unpaid) in licensed enterprises that typically cannot be obtained in the classroom.

Cooperative Education Seminar will continue to be a required component of the Cooperative Education program in Baldwin County. Students enrolled in the program are required to participate in the seminar class once per week to report weekly hours worked or hours acquired through internships. Cooperative education is supervised by a teacher who holds a Class B or higher certificate in Career Technical Education, has taken the Functions of the Coordinator or Principles of Coordination coursework, and who completed two hours of Child Labor Law training annually.

Related Instruction
Students participating in Cooperative Education work-based experiences are required to participate in Cooperative Education Seminar equivalent to one full class period per week. This one-credit course provides students with the opportunity to review or create an electronic portfolio in Career Cruising, which is accessible online, or discuss workplace issues, submit required reports. Students will develop additional skills in employability, ethics, personal finance, leadership, teamwork, and technical foundations in preparation for future employment or continuing education. All required reports and/or documentation may be submitted online, in person to the coordinator during regularly scheduled job visits, or in another manner deemed appropriate by the Coordinator.

State Department of Education Required Component
1. Student must meet the student selection criteria.
2. The selected Training Station/Agencies in fields related to students’ career objectives.
3. Training Agreements that stipulate the essential responsibilities and conditions of student employment.
4. Training plans must list processes, knowledge and skills that the student is expected to learn in the work-based experiences/apprenticeships and/or internships.
5. Continually supervise work-based experiences/apprenticeships or internships performed in a licensed enterprise under the supervision of a work-place mentor and the Coordinator.
6. Student evaluations by the Coordinator and employer/mentor.
7. Monthly training station visits for each student.
8. Students should participate in a Career Technical Student Organizations (CTSO) that related to the students’ career objective.

Prerequisites
It is recommended, but not required, that a student obtain concentrator status, (two courses within a Career Technical Education program prior to enrollment in cooperative education). Students who have not obtained concentrator status must have successfully completed a minimum of one Career and Technical Education credit. The Career Preparedness course will count as a Career Technical course regardless of the instructor’s teacher certification.

Training Station
Students must complete all components of the coursework required for the Cooperative Education Credit Seminar. A training sponsor (employer) should provide a student with an average of 8 to 15 hours of work experience per week for which the student will receive pay and school credit. A student must have a minimum of 140 hours of paid apprenticeship hours or 140 hours of unpaid internship hours. The 140 clock hours represents the required hours for a Carnegie Unit. The student will be awarded one credit each semester for successful completion of the career experience. A majority of these hours should be worked Monday through Friday. (Cooperative education students may earn one credit for the completion of a work-based experience/apprenticeship or internship in the summer if they are enrolled in a formal summer school program provided the Coordinator is on a 12-month contract.)

Requirements for Co-op Participation:
1. Have a clearly defined career objective.
2. Possesses the knowledge, skills, behavioral qualities, and abilities required for successful employment.
3. Must be at least 16 years old.
4. Is physically and mentally capable of performing the essential functions of the desired work-based experience. Essential functions are responsibilities that must be performed by the position.
5. Has successfully completed the minimum of one Career Technical Course. The Career Preparedness Course will fulfill the minimum requirement of a CTE course.
6. Entering the 11th or 12th grade.
7. Is on track for graduation.
8. Has acceptable attendance, grade and discipline record as validated by the Coordinator.
9. Has completed an Application for Enrollment.
10. Has provided the names of a minimum of three educators that know and are not related to the student who will complete recommendation forms including the teacher of the career cluster course, if applicable.
11. Has participated in a student interview to review information on the application, discuss parental/guardian support of participation, and discuss possible training stations.
12. Has the ability to provide transportation to and from the training station.
13. Has provided proof of current health or accidental insurance coverage and, if driving to and from the training station, proof of automobile liability insurance.
14. Have parental/guardian permission and support.

Co-op Rules & Policies

The student (you) are the most important component in this work based learning experience. The success of your cooperative education experience depends on you. A positive attitude, good work habits and eagerness to learn will bring you advancement on the job and substantial earnings that accompany success. It all depends on YOU.

As a co-op student-trainee, you must accept certain responsibilities to make this work based learning experience a success. Failure to adhere to co-op policies will result in removal from the co-op program and/or a failing grade.

1. Students are expected to work with the coop coordinator in finding employment. Students who do not put forth effort in trying to find employment (examples: not completing the required number of applications and job contacts each week, failure to follow up on job leads from the teacher coordinator or job coach, failing to show up for interviews, etc.) will be removed from the co-op program. If a student is unsuccessful to find employment (for whatever cause) after a reasonable amount of time, the student may be transferred out of the co-op program. Students must be participating in either paid or non paid work experience to remain in the co-op program.

2. Students should accept a job that will meet the timeline of your training period. (one semester minimum-one credit)

3. You are expected to report to work when scheduled by your training sponsor and remain at work until you are time is completed. If you find that you will be unavoidably detained or unable to show up for work, you will, ALWAYS, call your employer as soon as possible. You must notify your cooperative education coordinator at the next class meeting of your absence or tardiness from work.

4. You are required to keep a weekly wage-hour report of your co-op hours. Failure to keep wage-hour reports up to date will affect your grade. Hours must be accurately documented and maintained before co-op credits will be awarded.

5. You must exhibit honesty in all dealings of your employment with money, merchandise, time, and effort. Failure to do so will result in a failing grade and removal from the co-op program.

6. You may not quit your job. No job changes will be made without valid cause and the advance consultation and permission of the cooperative education coordinator and your parents. Quitting your job may result in the loss of credit(s).

7. Attendance is required for success at school and your job. You are highly encouraged to not be unnecessarily absent from your job or school. Schedule your recreation and other personal activities at a time that will not interfere with your job. Absenteeism from work could cause you to be fired from your training station. School absences from your co-op class will be made up after the 2nd absence on a day to be determined by your co-op teacher. If a student is fired for failure to attend work, they can be removed from the co-op program. If a student is absent from school on a work day, they must contact the cooperative education coordinator for further instructions. (Students must get permission from the cooperative education coordinator to work on a day they have missed school.)

8. Permission from your cooperative education coordinator, training sponsors and parents is required if you are employed with two or more businesses.

9. Transportation to and from your training station (job) is your responsibility. You must have dependable transportation to work. Transportation problems do not justify absence from work or failure to apply for jobs.
10. The work based learning course is an opportunity to learn, you are expected to remain with the training station to which you are assigned. Students may resign or change jobs only with the express written permission of the cooperative education coordinator. A student changing a job without written permission is subject to being removed from Cooperative Education and receiving a failing grade for the class.

11. If a student is fired or released from their job because of dishonesty, poor attitude, poor work habits, excessive absences, or improper work procedures, they may be removed permanently from the co-op program. A failing grade for co-op will be given for being fired or quitting your job. However, if a student is laid off or released from the job because of any unforeseen business problems and not a result of their work habits, the cooperative education coordinator will work with them in finding another training sponsor. If a student is dismissed from a job, they are to immediately inform their cooperative education coordinator. Failure to inform the coop coordinator about a dismissal or other problems at work will affect a student’s grade.

12. You are expected to comply with all policies set by both the school and training sponsor during your on-the-job training experience.

13. Students losing their training stations due to any action deemed unacceptable by the school and coop coordinator will be removed from the program with a loss of credit.

14. Grades for work-based experiences/apprenticeship or internship are determined by the Coordinator through utilization of written evaluations of your job performance and consultation with the employment supervisor. Your coordinator will make periodic visits to your training station to discuss your progress on the job. You will have an opportunity to review your evaluation with your training sponsor and/or teacher. This evaluation is made to help you become a better employee— all comments, suggestions, etc. are to be accepted in a mature fashion. This evaluation will be used in determining your coop grade as outlined in the course syllabus.

15. Co-op students are expected to leave the high school campus immediately following the cooperative education class. Students will not be allowed to remain on campus during co-op hours. Parents assume responsibility of their child at dismissal time for co-op students.

16. Because students must be employed either a work based experience/apprenticeship (paid) or in an internship (non-paid) to take part in the co-op program, students may not quit a job after working the minimum amount of hours for co-op credit (140 or 280 hours per term) while they are enrolled in the co-op program.

17. Students should exhibit good work habits on the job. Do not waste employer time visiting with friends or others while at work (either by phone or in person).

18. Regardless of the type of job you are performing, you will conduct yourself in a professional manner.

19. Co-op students are expected to follow the school board adopted dress code while on school campus. When on the job, they will abide by their training station dress code. No exceptions. Students are to present as neat in appearance as possible and follow good personal hygiene and grooming practices.

20. You will not perform tasks not related to your work while on the job without the explicit permission from your training sponsor. (Example: homework, reading, polishing nails, etc.)

21. Co-op students are required to have school insurance or appropriate hospital coverage as required by the school policy for career-technical students. Students who do not have insurance will be required to purchase either the 24 hours school day insurance plan offered through their respective high school offices or gain coverage through individual or parent’s coverage. This must be done within the first two weeks of school. In addition, if driving to and from the training station, proof of automobile liability insurance must be provided.

22. All co-op forms (training agreements, training plans, policies, etc.) must be signed and returned within two weeks of starting the coop program.

23. Student acknowledges that the primary purpose of work-based learning is educational and, therefore, agrees to abide by the policies of the Cooperative Education program and decisions of the teacher-coordinator, including those regarding specific job placements and assignments made without regard to specific pay rate, schedule, or similar variables.

24. Student acknowledges that the school, through the coop coordinator, is acting as an intermediary between employer and student and that the coop coordinator has a legitimate right to know and a significant role in determining the outcome of any employment issues including placement, termination, scheduling, assignments, and all other aspects of employment.
25. Parents should understand the student's responsibility to the training station and not interfere with the performance of his/her duties.

26. While on the job, your work should come first. If you feel that your studies, family, physical health, or moral well-being are jeopardized because of your job, you will consult your parents, coop coordinator, and training sponsor in order to find a solution or remedy for the situation. Only your coop coordinator or training sponsor may remove you from your training station if it is determined to be in your best interest (see policy #6).

27. Students should participate in Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO) that relates to career objective.

I understand that failure to adhere to the Baldwin County Board of Education co-op and work policies will affect my grade and/or continued participation in the co-op program. I understand that if any problems occur relating to my on the job training, I must first consult with my coordinator before any decisions are made. To fail on the job reflects not only on me, but also on all others placed in jobs by the cooperative education program. My co-op experience will reflect on all pupils who hope to secure part-time employment through this program. Therefore, as a cooperative education student-trainee, I agree to uphold the above policies in order to maintain the reputation of my school, and more importantly, of myself.

_________________________________  ________________
Student Trainee Signature                 Date

_________________________________  ________________
Parent/Guardian Signature                Date

Approved by the Baldwin County Board of Education October, 2014