

# Career Intern Program Handbook



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## Purpose

John Dewey states:

*“There is no discipline in the world so severe as the discipline of experience subjected to the tests of intelligent development and direction.”*

No single learning strategy exists that is best for all students. Some students learn best by reading books; others learn by combining reading with a variety of learning activities. A truly comprehensive education program provides a series of alternative learning strategies and learning environments for students.

Learners thrive in educational experiences that enable them to be involved in the learning process. With an emphasis on critical thinking and problem solving in real-life situations, the **Career Intern Program** offers more than just textbook exercises and classroom simulations. With a focus on exploration and discovery, students learn by defining problems and assuming responsibility for solutions. Students thrive in environments in which they are regarded as valuable and unique individuals whose ideas, opinions and suggestions can be taken seriously.

For high-achieving students, participation in the **Career Intern Program (CIP)**, on a professional level, can be vital to their total educational and personal development. Not only does the Program provide the broad vantage point necessary for gaining an overview of their chosen career area(s), it also enables students to become acquainted with the professional and decision-making positions for which their talents and skills are naturally suited. Furthermore, participation by high-achieving students in these real-life experiences expands awareness of their own goals, abilities, and interests, relative to future careers. The **Career Intern Program** helps students develop the good working habits necessary for success in any career area.

It is for these reasons that the **Career Intern Program** was developed and has successfully functioned as an integral part of the Livonia Public Schools' curriculum since 1976.

### **Chinese Proverb**

I hear and I forget

I see and I remember

I do and I understand

Life is a succession of lessons, which must be lived to be understood.

*Helen Keller*

## Performance Objectives

For high-achieving, self-motivated students in the Livonia Public Schools who have expressed an interest in professional careers and whose social and intellectual maturity often outpaces the standard curriculum, the following performance objectives have been developed for the *Career Intern Program*. By the end of the Program, the interns will:

- Increase awareness of their own interests, abilities and skills to assist them in identifying and setting future career goals.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the skills necessary for being successful in a global economy.
- Acquire knowledge of the organizational structure and function of the career area(s) being explored, as well as the duties and responsibilities of the leaders and other professionals involved.
- Continue to demonstrate good work habits.
- Demonstrate an increase in their self-confidence and social maturity.
- Improve oral and written communication skills.

## Program Overview

The *Career Intern Program* is a structured opportunity for self-motivated, high-achieving high school seniors to associate with executives and professional personnel as special assistants in a working environment. The internship Program consists of learning about organization and management, attending professional meetings, exploring various occupations, polishing skills in communications and interpersonal relations, teamwork, research projects, and learning about the intricacies of the business or professional organization to which the intern is assigned.

## Sponsor Selection

Sponsors are selected for the Program based on the nature of their business and their willingness to meet the Program objectives and designated sponsor responsibilities, as outlined in the "Internship Agreement" (Appendix A). Each new sponsor is provided with a copy of this ***Career Intern Program Handbook*** as well as a "Handbook for Supervisors -- Supervising and Assessing Student Interns."

## Candidate Selection

Prior to placement of the student at the intern site, an organized procedure for intern selection is followed:

- Students are invited to apply to the CIP during their junior year, based on their GPA. (*Minimum 3.0 and rigor of classes considered*)
- Candidates complete a Career Intern Program “Application” form (Appendix B), which is submitted to the Faculty Advisor in their home High School.
- The applicant will also submit three “Educator’s Recommendation” forms (Appendix C) to faculty members, who will rate the candidate’s qualifications for the Program.
- The Intern Coordinator and current interns then personally interview each applicant for final approval, reviewing the above information, together with the candidate’s test scores, grades, and attendance records.
- Selected intern candidates and their parents attend an evening orientation program designed to clarify Program objectives and answer questions.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### INTERN

Participation in the *Career Intern Program* for the self-motivated, high achieving student requires adherence to the following Program obligations:

1. **Term:** The intern will participate in the Program for one or two card markings (*approx. 9 weeks each*) during the semester and spend three or four hours per day at the sponsor’s site, four days per week.
2. **Site Overview:** The intern will participate in **non-paid** educational activities, including learning about the organizational structure and function of the sponsor’s site and the duties and responsibilities of its leaders and professional personnel; exploring various sponsor site-related occupations; doing research projects; and polishing skills in communications and interpersonal relations.
3. **Professionalism:** The intern will follow procedures outlined by the sponsor in regard to proper etiquette, grooming, and deportment when dealing with all persons whom the sponsor has them in contact.
4. **Meetings:** The intern will attend and participate in departmental, interdepartmental, and any community meetings that the sponsor may deem appropriate.
5. **Sponsor Conferences:** (*optional, depending on site and/or sponsor*): The intern will meet at least once a week with the sponsor to discuss progress in meeting Program objectives, to review learning experiences, to seek advice on problems, and to clarify project assignments.

## Roles and Responsibilities - Interns (continued)

6. **Site Projects** (*optional depending on site and/or sponsor*): The intern will define with the sponsor special assignments to be undertaken that demonstrate the knowledge and skills the intern has acquired, yet not violate the Fair Labor Standards Act.
7. **Attendance:** The intern will communicate any deviation from regular attendance at the intern site to the Program Coordinator and sponsor. A daily time sheet will be completed and submitted at the end of each marking period (see Appendix D).
8. **Journal:** The intern will keep a daily journal of activities, experiences, and impressions that will be submitted weekly to the Program Coordinator and sponsor. Journals must be completed on a computer, grammatically correct, concise (one page), and kept confidential in nature. Journals may be submitted at each seminar or via email.
9. **Seminar:** Each intern will attend a weekly seminar with the Program Coordinator and fellow interns to share experiences and participate in Program related activities.
10. **School Linkage:** The intern will use the Faculty Advisor as a link between the coordinator and the intern's teachers, counselors, and principals; this opens the possibility of sharing intern experiences and assists the Program Coordinator in Program promotion.
11. **Evaluation:** The intern will complete weekly journals, a portfolio, and prepare at the end of the semester a permanent record transcript summary (final paper/project) of his/her experiences. The site sponsor(s) or their designee will evaluate the intern at each intern site (see Appendix E – Sponsor Evaluation form).
12. **Program Promotion:** The intern is expected to assist in the Program's promotion within their respective high school through CIP classroom and assembly presentations.

### PARENT OR GUARDIAN

The parent or guardian is an integral part of the Program whose primary Program-related functions include:

1. **Support:** Encourage the intern to meet and complete all requirements and objectives of the Program.
2. **Communication:** Contact the Program Coordinator regarding any problems or concerns.
3. **Attendance:** Contact the Program Coordinator, as well as the home High School, if the student will be absent.
4. **Site Development:** If an internship site is not available matching the career goals of the son/daughter, parent(s) may assist their child in developing a sponsor site.

## Roles and Responsibilities - (continued)

### FACULTY ADVISOR

The Faculty Advisor for the *Career Intern Program* is the primary liaison between the intern and the home high school. Responsibilities include:

1. **Program Promotion:** Promote the Program within the high school and assist the Program Coordinator with candidate selection.
2. **Scheduling:** Consult with each intern's counselor to insure proper scheduling and a positive transition from school to active participation in the Program.
3. **Application Process:** Assist the Program Coordinator with the application process by making Program application forms available and by collecting these forms for use in interviewing and screening the intern candidates.

### SPONSOR

Sponsors are selected for the Program based on the nature of their business and their willingness to meet the Program objectives and designated sponsor responsibilities. Major responsibilities include:

1. **Orientation:** Provide a non-paid, educational experience, which will enable the intern to develop a clear and concise understanding of the purpose and function of the sponsoring site and the sponsor's role. Priorities to be considered should include, but not be limited to, organizational structure, the decision-making process, major products or services, and financial resources.
2. **Career Awareness:** Provide the intern the opportunity to observe and interact in various settings with a variety of specialized personnel on a professional level so as to broaden the intern's career area awareness.
3. **Professionalism:** Inform the intern of the proper business procedures, attire, hours, and appropriate manner in dealing with employees, clients, and others with whom the sponsor interacts.
4. **Staff Briefing:** Explain the content and intent of the Program to the key staff members who will be interacting with the intern on a regular basis. Solicit their support and cooperation in meeting the objectives of the Program and in providing a sound educational experience.
5. **Meetings:** Provide the intern the opportunity to attend, be briefed on, and be allowed to participate in departmental, interdepartmental, and community meetings that may be appropriate to the purpose of the internship.

## Roles and Responsibilities - Sponsor (continued)

6. **Projects** (*optional in some cases*): Develop and define special project assignments with the intern which will demonstrate the knowledge and skills the intern has acquired, yet not violate the Fair Labor Standards Act.
7. **Intern Communication:** Establish a regular meeting with the intern to review progress and share concerns and experiences.
8. **Program Feedback:** Communicate with the Program Coordinator concerning the intern's progress.
9. **Evaluation:** Complete the Evaluation Form and then meet with the intern to review his/her performance and outline steps for improvement.

### PROGRAM COORDINATOR

The *Career Intern Program* Coordinator is the primary supervisor of the Program. The major responsibilities of the Coordinator are:

1. **Program Promotion:** Promote the Program within the community and the school settings, and work with the Faculty Advisor in each school in recruiting and selecting student interns.
2. **Intern Recruitment:** Interview applicants following an information assembly at each high school. Select intern candidates who meet the criteria for the Program.
3. **Sponsors:** Select sponsors for the Program based on the nature of their business and their willingness to meet Program objectives.
4. **Parent Orientation:** Explain the components of the Program to parents at an evening meeting once intern candidates are selected, and prior to the candidates interviewing with sponsors for placement.
5. **Intern Orientation:** Explain the responsibilities and expectations of interns at the orientation prior to the start of the on-site internship.
6. **Attendance:** Monitor attendance records for each intern and talk individually with those who fail to call in absences or who are absent too frequently from their site.
7. **Site Monitor:** Review each intern's site to determine the quality of the experience and to mediate intern/sponsor concerns.
8. **Seminar Leader:** Plan, organize, and conduct the scheduled seminars.

## **Roles and Responsibilities – Program Coordinator (continued)**

9. **Journals:** Collect each intern’s journal weekly and critique it to determine the quality of the experience as well as the writing style.
10. **Intern Conferences:** Meet with each intern to review knowledge and skills acquired in the Program, to assist the student as needed, and to follow up on progress in meeting Program objectives.
11. **Conflicts:** Work with the sponsor, intern, Faculty Advisor, and parents to resolve any problems, which may prevent the objectives of the Program from being accomplished.
12. **Record Maintenance:** Maintain a file for each semester of interns to demonstrate a record of individual responsibility, which includes a copy of each intern’s Resume, Journal samples, Evaluations, and Transcript Attachment Summary (final paper).

## **Interviewing and Placement**

Once the intern candidates are selected, they meet with the Intern Program Coordinator to review interviewing techniques and to select interviewing sites from a sponsor list. Each potential intern is asked to complete the interviewing process within a designated two- to three-week time period. Interns are also encouraged to develop their own site for their internship(s).

Once the interviewing procedure has been completed, the Coordinator will confirm the placement with both the sponsor and the intern.

The role of “intern” varies, depending on the nature of the sponsor and the interest of the student. The intern placements are with both large and small professional organizations. Interns may choose one site for the entire (*approx.*) 18-week semester, or two sites, each for 9-weeks.

The *Career Intern Program* allows a variety of placement opportunities with professional personnel. Potential placements may include medical facilities, radio and television, government agencies, newspapers, hotels and restaurants, public utilities, retail establishments, law firms and agencies, manufacturing industries, social service agencies, business or industry sites, high end technology sites, and various other organizations that meet individual needs. **However, internship sites are designed to match the interest of each individual intern. Sites can be developed to match most career interests.**

## Intern Participation

The Program requires a minimum of three hours of participation by the intern, four days each week, at the intern site. One day each week, interns from all high schools meet with the Program Coordinator for seminars on communication, team building, self-awareness, career awareness, decision-making skills, portfolio building, diversity, experience sharing, as well as other “hot topics” in the business world.

Career Interns are not paid since they are in the Program to learn. However, they do receive academic credit for their participation (see “*Credit Policy*” below).

Students carry three or four classes at their home high school while participating in the Program. The hours at the site are determined by sponsor hours and requirements, as well as by the needs of the student based on the student’s schedule.

At the end of the semester, each student receives an ‘S’ (*satisfactory*) or ‘U’ (*unsatisfactory*) grade for the internship experience, which does not affect the student’s grade point average.

Since the location and nature of each placement is unique, student interns are required to provide their own transportation and dress according to the requirements of the organization.

Because of the serious nature of the Program, and to insure every benefit of this opportunity, interns and their parent/s sign a “Contract of Understanding”. (Appendix F)

## Credit Policy

Interns are required to carry course work at their home High School, in addition to their participation in the *Career Intern Program*. The option the student chooses will depend on the sponsor site requirements as well as the individual needs of the student. This will be clarified and determined during the student/sponsor interview.

The following chart describes the relationship between the minimum site time required, the number of classes taken, and the semester credit awarded:

Classes	CIP Hours	Site Hours	Credit
Hours 1-3	Hours 4-5-6	4 hrs. daily (16 hrs. weekly)	1.5
Hours 1-4	Hours 5-6	3 hrs. daily (12 hrs. weekly)	1.0

## On Site Accident/Injury Procedures

In the event of an accident or injury occurring at the intern site, the sponsor (or an appropriate designated person) must notify the Intern Coordinator immediately, as well as the intern’s parents. The Coordinator can be reached by calling (734) 744-2534. Each intern is required to have an emergency card on file with the sponsor as well as with the Coordinator, listing contact information for parent(s)/guardian(s).

## **Fair Labor Standards Act**

For the intern to be classified as a trainee or student, the workplace must meet the following six criteria for unpaid trainees, as taken from the Michigan Department of Education's A Toolkit for Implementing Risk Management Strategies in Work-Based Learning Programs revised June 2003, and, Employment Relationship Under the USDL Fair Labor Standards Act.

1. *the employer that provides the training derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the trainees or students, and on occasion operations may be impeded;*
2. *the training is for the benefit of the trainees or students;*
3. *the trainees or students do not displace regular employees, but work under their close observation;*
4. *the trainees or students are not entitled to wages or other compensation for the time spent in training;*
5. *the trainees or students are not entitled to a job at the end of the training period; and*
6. *the training, even though it includes actual operation at the facilities of the employer, is like what would be given in a career and technical education program.*

## **Procedure for Resolving Conflicts**

If an intern should have a problem or concern at the internship site, the intern should first try to analyze the situation, discuss the problem and solutions with the Coordinator, and then pursue the problem with the person involved. If the solution cannot be resolved by this procedure, the intern should contact the sponsor or their designee, but keep the Coordinator informed.

If the intern and the sponsor cannot resolve the conflict, the intern should notify the Intern Coordinator (or the faculty advisor) as soon as possible. The Intern Coordinator and the sponsor will schedule a meeting between all parties involved.

In the event the results of this meeting prove to be unsatisfactory, arrangements will be made for the termination of the internship at this site.

## High School Linkage

It is important to emphasize that the high school plays a significant role in the life of each intern. Each is a student first and an intern second. The student intern continues with sequential college bound classes and schedules those classes during hours 1-4 at their home high school. The Intern Coordinator also encourages electives suitable to the student's interests or career intent. Since this is a Program for college-bound students, academics necessary for college are primary in importance.

In addition, each intern is expected to develop a procedure to keep up with school news pertaining to activities, requirements, and graduation responsibilities. Each high school emphasizes that the services provided by teachers, counselors, and administrators should be taken advantage of as needed.

Interns are also expected to assist in the Program's promotion within their respective high school through CIP classroom and assembly presentations.

## Seminar

During the course of most weeks, each intern is required to attend a seminar with the Intern Coordinator and fellow interns. These seminars are conducted with the total group and may range in length from two to two and a half hours. Interns may also be asked to attend individual conferences with the Coordinator.

The seminars are designed to enable each intern to:

1. Relate and share experiences, observations, and impressions of the weekly involvement in the Program.
2. Participate in problem solving, decision-making, and simulations for personal and social development.
3. Develop self-awareness, positive thinking skills, and a better understanding of interpersonal relationships.
4. Tour and become knowledgeable of fellow intern's sponsor sites, at the same time broadening career-awareness for one's self.
5. Participate in future-education and career-planning activities.
6. Explore current trends in their personal and professional life.
7. Participate in the development, organization, and implementation of *Career Intern Program* promotional activities.

## Journal

Interns are required to keep a daily journal. In the journal, they recount their activities and experiences, describe what they have learned, and relate their impressions of their internship as well as share how they are practicing the skills learned at the seminars. This journal, which is submitted weekly to the Coordinator and the sponsor, serves the following functions:

1. Enables the Intern Coordinator and sponsor to assess the experience at the sponsor's site.
2. Provides an opportunity for the interns to write about their experiences while practicing the skills learned at the seminars.
3. Provides a vehicle for the interns to communicate their understanding of their experience into practical knowledge for personal growth.
4. Provides an outlet for the intern to communicate concerns and impressions of the placement site.
5. Provides an opportunity for interns to improve written and oral communication skills.
6. Provides a set of notes to work from when writing the final paper about the intern experiences.

The intern's weekly journal must be completed on a computer, be grammatically correct, and concise (one page). The intern will be careful to omit any information that is confidential to the site or the persons at the site. Students are to bring their journal to each seminar or submit it via email to the Coordinator on a weekly basis. Sponsor journals will be provided via email or hard copy at the end of each week.

## Multiple Sponsor Involvement

The *Career Intern Program* is a career exploration program. Many students will do just that...explore careers. In other words, they may wish to explore more than one career in their semester as a Career Intern. This requires careful planning and sponsor cooperation.

Coincidentally, many sponsors are tuning in to the multiple-sponsor concept. Six or nine weeks of sponsorship may fit their work schedule better than a full semester of 18 weeks. This enables a sponsor to have two or three interns during a semester, one at a time, and a chance to mentor on a one-to-one rather than a one-to-two basis. Some sponsors may elect to mentor only one short-term intern per semester or school year.

## Evaluation

An evaluation process has been developed to monitor all aspects of the *Career Intern Program*. There are site visitations by the Program Coordinator, written evaluations by the sponsor (see Appendix E – “Sponsor Evaluation” form) and reviews of each intern’s weekly journal by the Coordinator.

By the end of the Program, all interns will:

1. Have acquired a knowledge of the organizational structure and function of the career area(s) being explored, and the duties and responsibilities of the leaders and other professionals involved – as demonstrated by:
  - a) Sponsor Evaluation(s)
  - b) Student journals
  - c) Final paper/project
  - d) Seminar participation
  - e) Informational interview with sponsor and/or HR representative
  - f) Powerpoint presentation of internship experience
2. Have an increased awareness of their own interests, abilities, and skills to assist them in identifying and setting future career goals – as demonstrated by:
  - a) Final paper/project
  - b) Student journals
  - c) Seminar participation
  - d) College choices
3. Continue to demonstrate good work habits – as demonstrated by:
  - a) Sponsor Evaluation(s)
  - b) Self Evaluation
  - c) Quality of student journals
  - d) Seminar participation
4. Demonstrate an increase in their self-confidence and social maturity – as demonstrated by:
  - a) Sponsor Evaluation(s)
  - b) Final paper/project
  - c) Development and demonstration of public speaking skills
5. Have improved communications skills, both oral and written – as demonstrated by:
  - a) The weekly journal analysis
  - b) The Sponsor Evaluation(s)
  - c) Presentations at seminars, to parents, at Program assemblies, and others to be determined