

Work-based Learning at Charlestown High School

Written by Administrator
Wednesday, 19 April 2017 07:25 -

By Mark Bowen and Bailey White

Work-based learning has become an important part of student life at Charlestown High School. Over the course of a school year, students gain the opportunity to learn new knowledge and add experience for life after high school.

Students can choose between a cooperative education and an internship. The difference in the two are: cooperative education opportunities are paid positions and the internships are unpaid positions.

Students create outlines of plans for what they want to accomplish during the work-based opportunity. Then they get placed in a setting that relates to their chosen career path.

Based on the number of credits earned (two to six credits), the State of Indiana requires a sliding scale of hours to be logged at their Work-Based Learning site. In addition, over the course of the school year, students complete a portfolio based on their chosen career/Work-Based Learning site. The portfolio includes a resume, training plan, training agreement, work samples, five-year career goals, letters of recommendation, skills list, and a philosophy statement to name a few. This means while they are at their internship or work study, they gain credits as if they were taking an elective course during the school day.

“Work-Based Learning is beneficial to me because it’s a good skill, and it shows leadership and team management. It builds character, and UPS is paying for my college. I love my job, and I recommend Work-Based Learning to juniors and seniors all the time,” said Charlestown High School senior, Myron Gansbauer.

“Rather than learning at school, these Work-Based Learning students are given the opportunity to learn outside of school. Work-Based Learning allows students to do exactly as the name suggests. They work and learn within their chosen career field. This model is effective for situations a small school could not possibly provide such as floral design, entrepreneurship, event planning, culinary, physical therapy, and radiology. Plus students gain valuable work experience,” stated Jeanne Null, College and Career Advisor.

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Work-Based Learning not only prepares high school students for jobs after graduation, it also gives them experience to put on their future resumes. Null is currently scheduling Charlestown High School juniors for work-based experiences for next school year.