



TO: District Superintendents
Superintendents of Schools
Public School Administrators
Nonpublic School Administrators
Charter School Administrators

From: Shannon Tahoe, Interim Commissioner

Date: April 20, 2020

Re: Updated Guidance on Work-Based Learning Programs in Response to COVID-19

Background

On March 16, 2020 Governor Cuomo signed an executive order directing all schools in New York State to close by March 18 and has continued that order until May 15, 2020 in response to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) emergency. The Office of Career and Technical Education (CTE) has received many questions from school districts regarding work-based learning (WBL) programs. In order to address current state-wide school closures and the possibility of extended school closures, the Office of CTE is putting forth the following guidance with respect to these programs.

Recommendations for Schools

The Office of CTE oversees four registered work-based learning programs (CEIP, Co-op, GEWEP, and WECEP). Additionally, the Office oversees the process for CTE programs seeking NYSED approval. Work-based learning experiences are a required component of NYSED-approved programs and the evaluation of applications for program approval includes a review of work-based learning experiences provided (through either registered or unregistered experiences). Districts and BOCES determine the types of work-based opportunities and the number of hours provided¹ when developing CTE programs for NYSED approval.

Closures and social distancing requirements caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) are preventing many students from participating in work-based learning opportunities. As such, the following guidance issued on March 13, 2020² from NYSED applies to work-based learning.

Earning Course Credit and Meeting Unit of Study Requirements

In districts where distance and online learning methods are available, or other continuity of learning strategies are utilized, the priority for the instruction should be that which best prepares students to meet the learning outcomes for the course and prepare for the culminating examination if applicable. Any student who achieves the learning outcomes for the course should earn the applicable course/diploma credit without regard to the 180-minute/week unit of study requirement in Commissioner's Regulations Part 100.1.³

Further, in the event that extended closure interferes with a school or district's ability to provide the full unit of study by the end of the school year, either in face-to-face instruction or through other methods, as long as the student has met the standards assessed in the provided coursework, the student should be granted the diploma credit.

Therefore, local discretion can be used in waiving some or all of the work-based learning hours in New York's four registered work-based learning programs: Career Exploration Internship Program (CEIP); Cooperative Career & Technical Education Work Experience Program (CO-OP); General Education Work Experience Program (GEWEP), and Work Experience and Career Exploration Program (WECEP) as well as locally determined work-based learning requirements in NYSED-approved CTE programs so long as the student has otherwise attained the applicable CDOS standards 1 (Career Development), 2 (Integrated Learning), and 3a (Universal Foundation Skills) at the commencement level.

¹ Implementation Guide for Career and Technical Education Program Approval found at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/cte/ctepolicy/guide.html>

² <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/sss/schoolhealth/schoolhealthservices/coronavirus/nysed-covid-19-second-guidance-3-13-20.pdf>

³ Part 100 of Commissioner's Regulations found at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/part100/>