

FORWARD

Cooperative Education has long been an important part of the program mix for career and technical education programs, whether as a stand alone program based on the coop method or as part of the instructional methodology for programs such as Marketing Education, Health Occupations Education, and others. While program titles have changed from Industrial and Distributive Education to Cooperative Occupational Education, Cooperative Industrial Education, and Cooperative Vocational Education, the underlying concept of applying knowledge and skills learned in the classroom to the worksite remains unchanged. It is our intent to make sure cooperative education remains a valuable part of the program mix for career and technical education even as changes occur throughout the K-12 delivery system by providing a curriculum which develops career skills for all students.

The current change in program title to Cooperative Career Education provides an opportunity to review the program curriculum and goals last revised in 1997. Workplace demands have changed. Preparation of entry level employees has given way to an emphasis on workers with higher level transferable skills. The demands on schools have also changed. Standardized testing, emphasis on mastery of academics, and increased instructional time for the core subjects has placed pressure on all elective courses, particularly those using the cooperative method of instruction.

The purpose of this project is to provide teachers and other curriculum planners with a framework for revising program goals and curriculum standards for cooperative education programs. This framework can serve as the basis for development of a curriculum which meets the needs of the district and its patrons, and best serves the students in the district. This project points the way to strengthening cooperative education in the secondary schools of Missouri.

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