



# WEE CAMP

Workplace Experience Exchange Camp



Funded by:



THE RAPIDES FOUNDATION

**WEE CAMP ELEMENTARY**  
**JUNE 12-16, 2023**

[www.theorchardfoundation.org](http://www.theorchardfoundation.org)

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# WHY WEE CAMP

## GOAL

The goal of the Workplace Experience Exchange Camp is to provide experiences for educators to learn through direct, hands-on experience about trends, skill requirements, and opportunities in Central Louisiana.

## APPROACH

Each summer in Central Louisiana, a select group of public school educators attend a one-week sneak peek into the region's high-demand, high-wage jobs. Through talks and tours coordinated by The Orchard Foundation, educators are immersed in the worlds that their students will enter one day as credentialed and degreed workers. WEE Camp is often the first time that educators step into the workplace and learn about the careers and work environments that their students will encounter. The aim is to cultivate a broader, global mindset among educators that they can instill in their students.

WEE Camp also connects them to real-world workforce trends and requirements. At camp, cohorts of educators are hosted by local employers, touring different employer sites and learning about what it takes to be successful in each workplace. Company representatives share their industry's trends and their workforce needs, and then drill down into what sorts of skills and characteristics they are seeking in future employees. On the jobsite, the educators study the competencies that their students will need to thrive in those jobs.

## OUTCOMES

Educators leave WEE Camp with first-hand knowledge of the workforce issues facing employers in Central Louisiana. They emerge with the confidence that they can tailor their classroom practice to incorporate the new knowledge they acquired. They are better equipped to teach their students to build new proficiencies, not only in content, but also in skills such as problem-solving, leadership, and collaboration with an emphasis on real-world applications.



# WEE CAMP E

## PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

### AVOUELLES PARISH

Plaucheville Elementary School  
Riverside Elementary School

### CATAHOULA PARISH

Block High School  
Jonesville Elementary School

### GRANT PARISH

Pollock Elementary School

### NATCHITOCHE PARISH

Goldonna Elementary & Junior High School

### RAPIDES PARISH

Alexandria Middle Magnet School  
Carter C. Raymond Elementary School  
Glenmora High School  
Lessie Moore Elementary School  
Ruby Wise Elementary School

### VERNON PARISH

Pickering Elementary  
Pitkin High School  
Vernon Middle School

### WINN PARISH

Winnfield Middle School



# HISTORY



**In its 8th year, WEE Camp - Central Louisiana's first industry externship program - has served 273 educators in Cenla.**



## **WEE CAMP I Starts**

In 2015, WEE Camp was established by The Orchard Foundation, serving nine parishes. It has since expanded into multiple events with increased engagement by partners.



## **WEE CAMP II Emerges**

In 2016, WEE Camp II was born to offer educators a more in-depth experience with a smaller number of industry partners.



## **VEE Camp (Virtual)**

In 2017, The Orchard Foundation developed and implemented VEE Camp in partnership with the LA Department of Education. VEE Camp provided a model for statewide implementation. When COVID precautions caused WEE Camp to go virtual, the virtual model was utilized again.



## **WEE Camp Elementary**

In 2022, WEE Camp added a novel option for K-6 educators. WEE Camp Elementary, the newest iteration of WEE Camp, launched with 20 educators from 11 schools.

# HOW WE DO IT

## INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

This year, WEE Camp Elementary educators were connected to 11 regional employers and organizations. From manufacturing to healthcare, to agriculture, STEM and the energy industry, many of Cenla's key industries were represented.



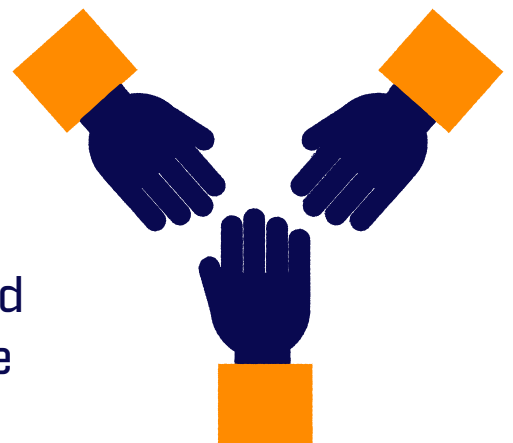
## EDUCATORS

20 elementary educators were accepted to WEE Camp E, representing 15 public schools in 7 school districts.



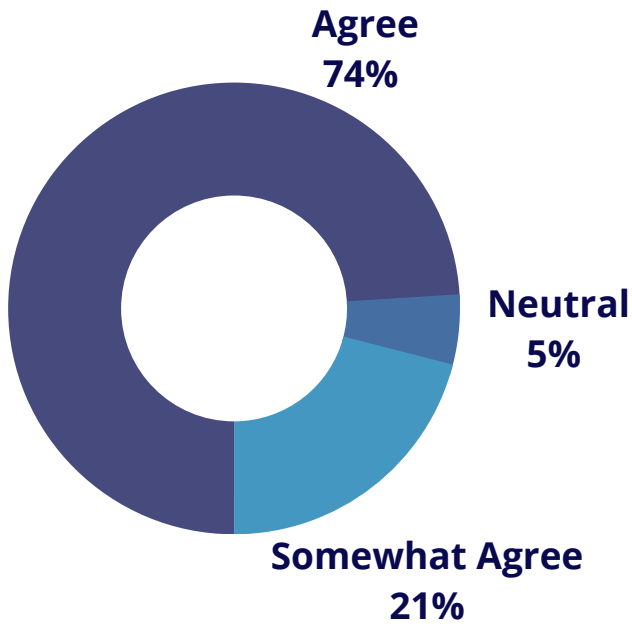
## COLLABORATION

Educators forge connections with industry and gain practical knowledge of the workplace. They bring their real-world experiences back into classrooms for the benefit of the students.

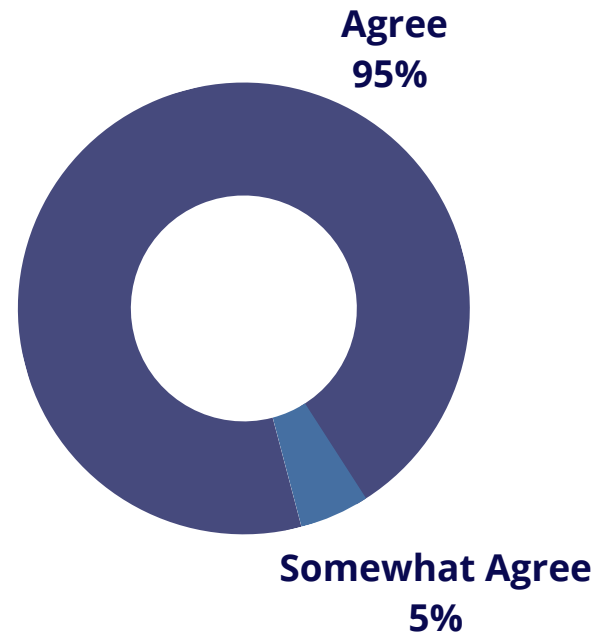


# WEE IMPACT ON EDUCATORS

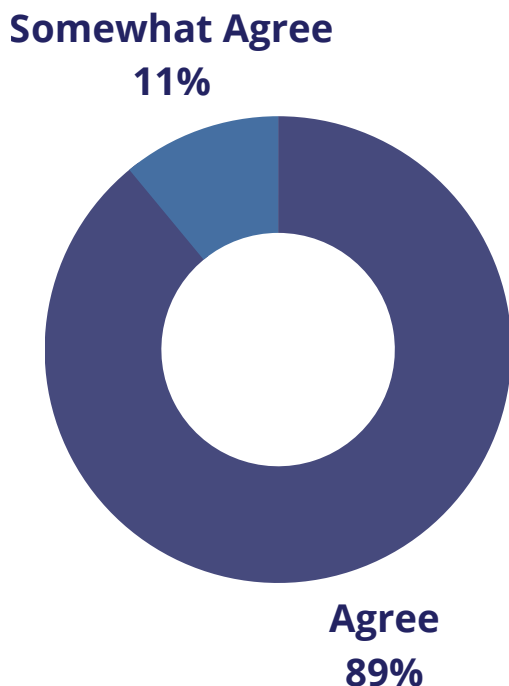
## Connections to classroom subject matter



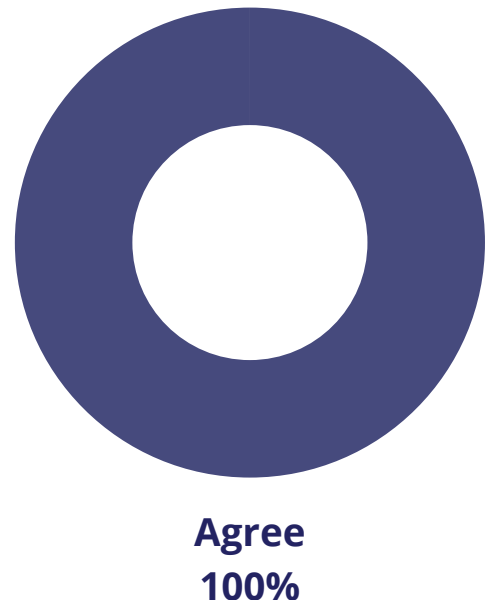
## Increased awareness of employer requirements



## Identified ways to incorporate skill requirements into classroom



## Increased awareness of programs and jobs in region



\*Results from post-WEE Camp satisfaction surveys of educators

# WEE CAMP FEEDBACK



{Because of WEE Camp}, I am empowered to educate my students about career opportunities within our state and connect classroom learning directly to careers and workforce.

This experience deepened my understanding of the correlation between student learning and relevance of real world problem solving in the classroom.



WEE Camp has shown me the connection and demand of incorporating STEM in the classroom and these skills in career fields.

WEE Camp was a meaningful experience that highlighted the need to expose students to industries and career opportunities to establish an awareness of the dynamic workforce.



This experience expanded my awareness and knowledge of industries and careers in our region.

WEE Camp removed imaginary boundaries of bringing real world problem solving, STEM skills, and career exposure into an elementary classroom.





# INDUSTRY PARTNERS

*Thank You!*

