



WEE CAMP

Workplace Experience Exchange Camp



Funded by:



THE RAPIDES FOUNDATION

WEE CAMP II
JUNE 2-6, 2025

www.theorchardfoundation.org
www.rapidesfoundation.org

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 II

PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

GRANT

Grant High School

LASALLE

Jena High School

RAPIDES

Northwood High School

Pineville High School

VERNON

Simpson High School

Rosepine High School



HISTORY



In its 10th year, WEE Camp - Central Louisiana's first industry externship program - has served 386 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 II educators were connected to 11 regional employers and organizations. From manufacturing to healthcare, to agriculture and STEM, many of Cenla's key industries were represented.



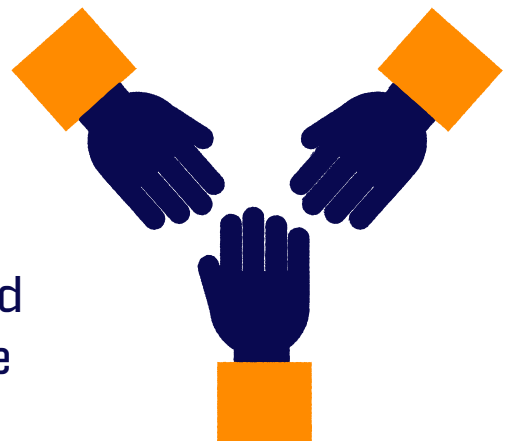
EDUCATORS

8 middle and high school educators were accepted to WEE Camp II, representing 6 public schools in 4 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.



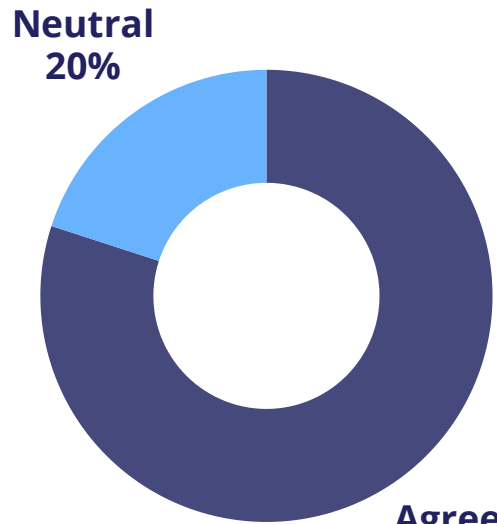
WEE IMPACT ON EDUCATORS

Connections to
classroom subject matter



Agree
100%

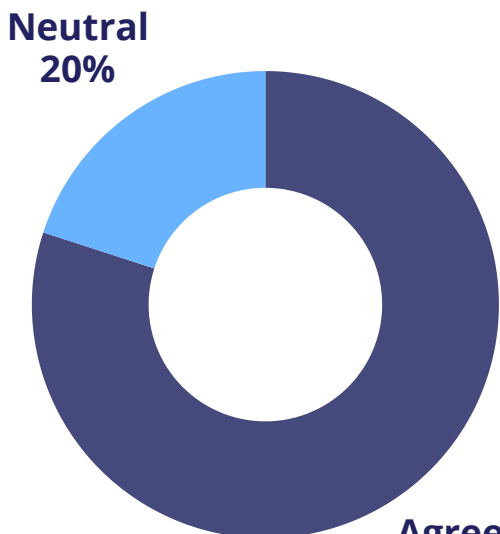
Increased awareness of
employer requirements



Agree
80%

Neutral
20%

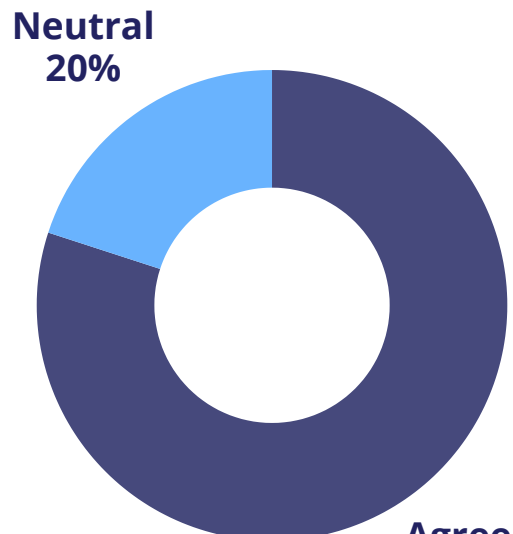
Identified ways to incorporate
skill requirements into classroom



Agree
80%

Neutral
20%

Increased awareness of
programs and jobs in region



Agree
80%

Neutral
20%

WEE CAMP FEEDBACK



The [WEE] camp is excellent with connecting various subjects/classes to the workforce.

WEE camp allows us as teachers to know what exactly our students will need so that this information can be brought back into the classrooms.



Through doing IEPs for my roster students, we have to start with transitional services their Freshman year, which is hard before most of them have no idea what they want to do in life at that age. The [WEE Camp] experience allows me to tell the students things I've learned about the various job opportunities and allows me to guide the students, if needed, in making decisions about transitional services.

The camp allows you to see and view jobs from a different perspective which helps understand the workforce more in depth.



I LOVE WEE Camp and I encourage all business owners that I know to get involved in WEE Camp so that more opportunities can be offered to students in central Louisiana.

INDUSTRY PARTNERS

Thank You

for your invaluable partnership

in the success of this year's WEE Camp! Your support in welcoming Central Louisiana educators into your workplace strengthens the link between education and industry - creating meaningful connections that promote student growth & workforce readiness.



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