



WEE CAMP

Workplace Experience Exchange Camp



Funded by:



THE RAPIDES FOUNDATION

WEE CAMP II
JUNE 8-12, 2026

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

Natchitoches Central High School, NATCHITOCHES

Pineville Junior High School, RAPIDES

Peabody Magnet High School, RAPIDES

Plainview High School, RAPIDES

Northwood High School, RAPIDES

Rapides Alternative Positive Program for Students (RAPPS), RAPIDES

Leesville High School, VERNON



HISTORY



In its 11th year, WEE Camp - Central Louisiana's first industry externship program - has served 419 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 8 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 7 public schools in 3 school districts.



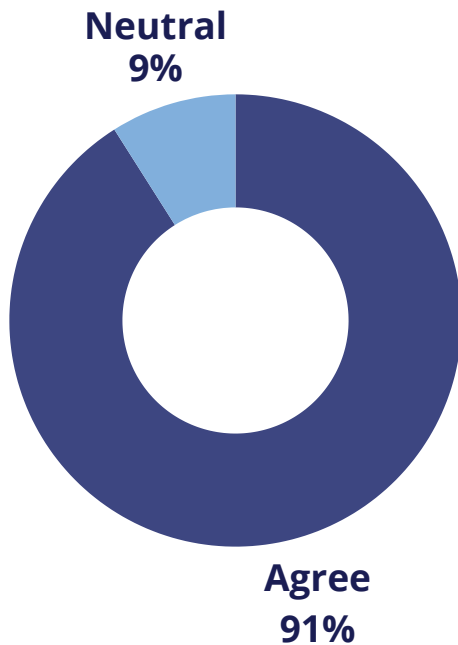
COLLABORATION

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.

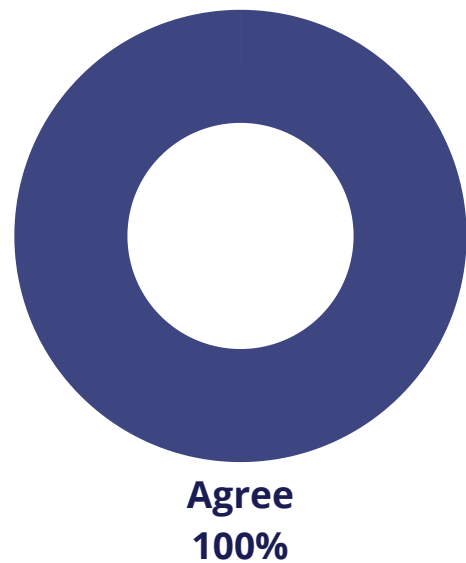


WEE IMPACT ON EDUCATORS

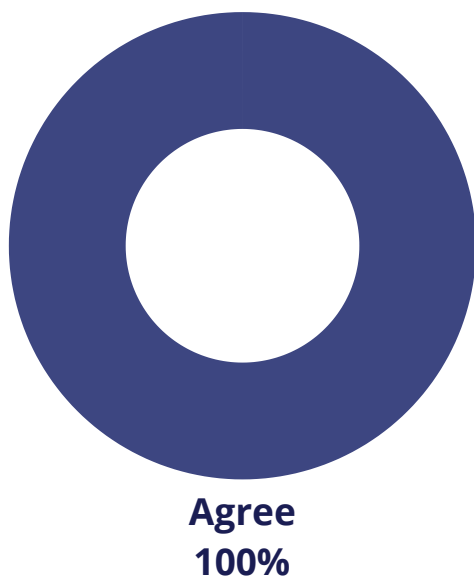
Connections to
classroom subject matter



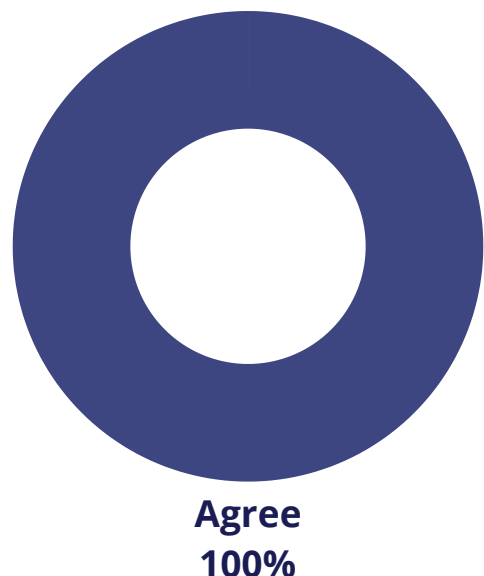
Increased awareness of
employer requirements



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



The [WEE] camp will help me focus on incorporating some of the skills employers said was important and needed.

Each industry went above and beyond to help us understand the paths taken to reach the needed certifications or degrees to gain employment in their fields.



The whole experience was great. I like that every company is different and competitive in their own way. Students will have a choice to choose based on the information given, but overall based on what their interest is.

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



WEE Camp provided me with relevant career and college information to share with my students. I plan to schedule more field trips and tours of businesses that are relevant to their career choices.

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.



**Rapides Regional
Medical Center**



Central Management Company



**CAREER
COMPASS**