



WEE CAMP

Workplace Experience Exchange Camp



Funded by:



WEE CAMP ELEMENTARY
JUNE 9-13, 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 E



PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

AVOYELLES

Cottonport Elementary School

CATAHOULA

Block High School

Harrisonburg High School

Jonesville Elementary School

RAPIDES

Alexandria Middle Magnet School

Lessie Moore Elementary School

Mabel Brasher Elementary School

Oak Hill High School

Plainview High School

Rapides Alternative Positive Program

VERNON

Pitkin High School

Vernon Middle 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 Elementary educators were connected to 9 regional employers and organizations. From manufacturing to healthcare, to agriculture, STEM and the energy industry, many of Cenla's key industries were represented.



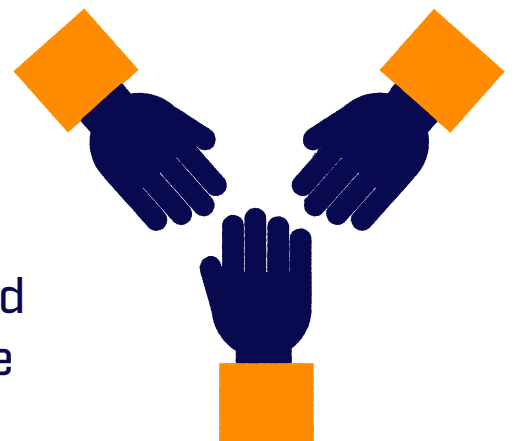
EDUCATORS

23 elementary educators were accepted to WEE Camp E, representing 12 public schools in 4 school districts.



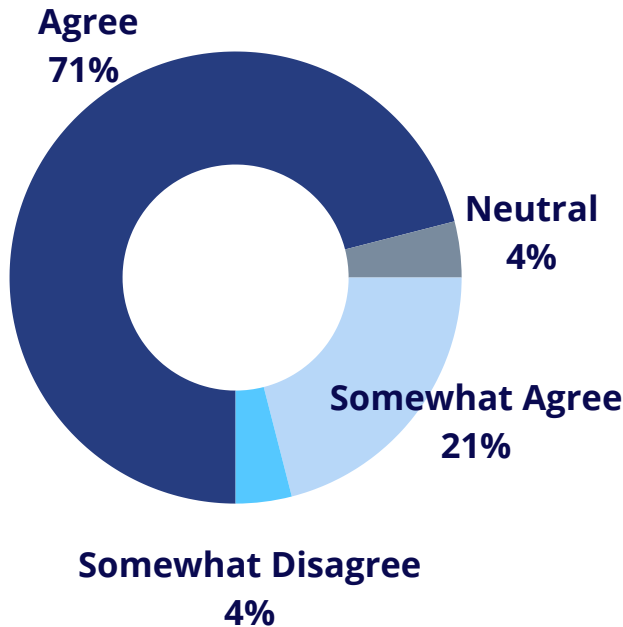
COLLABORATION

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.

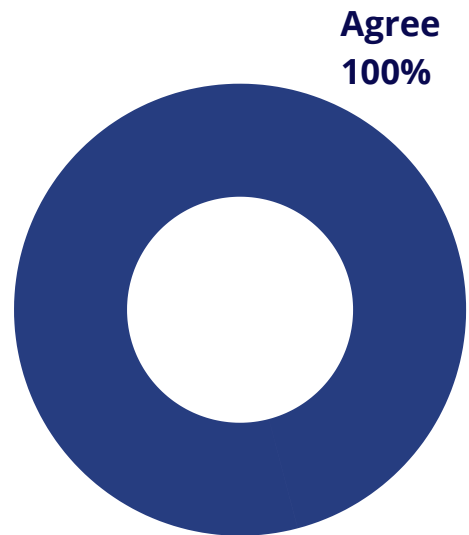


WEE IMPACT ON EDUCATORS

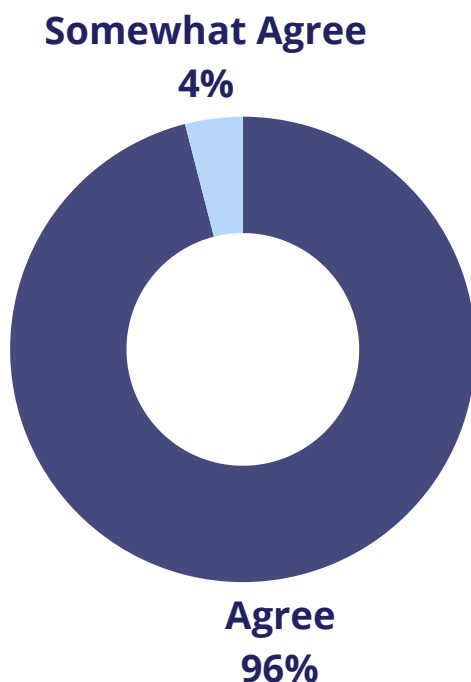
Connections to classroom subject matter



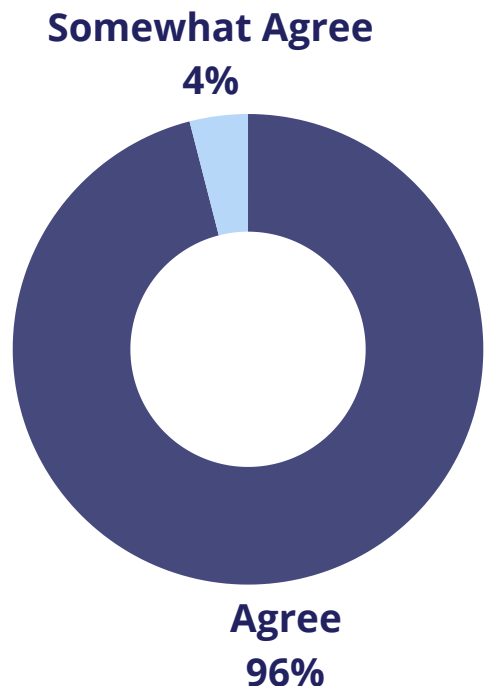
Increased awareness of employer requirements



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



This whole experience was eye opening. As educators, we stress furthering education but that doesn't always mean college. Trades are needed to make our communities survive. Thank you for this experience.



We were presented with many programs that we will be able to incorporate in our classrooms! I also learned about various companies who will come to the schools to teach our students about different opportunities and resources available to them.



I truly enjoyed each business and can't wait to take some of these skills back to my kiddos.



From drilling in on the metric system's importance to the CPR and Stop the Bleed training, I look forward to adding many of these nuggets of knowledge into my lesson plan for the year, as well as trying to get some of these programs implemented in our school. As a rural school with only a caution light and volunteer fire department, our kids can sometimes miss out on the bigger picture of what's available to them, especially when they're younger like the one's in my classroom. I really look forward to broadening their worldview with the knowledge I've gained this week.



This was a very informative camp and I can't wait to use this in the library for my elementary and high school students.

INDUSTRY PARTNERS

Thank You

for your invaluable partnership

in the success of 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**



**CRAIN - PONTHEUX
COMPANIES**

