

258.17 Community-based workplace learning program — workstart.

1. A community-based workplace learning program, called “*workstart*”, is established as a voluntary collaborative educational program between business and Iowa’s secondary and postsecondary education system designed to provide the means by which students can be better prepared to enter the workforce. The program is to provide all participating high school students with academic skills and appropriate competency-based job-specific skills needed to enter high performance workplace employment through a jointly planned and supervised instructional and worksite-based training program that is articulated with postsecondary advanced programs of preparation, United States department of labor-approved apprenticeship programs, and other appropriate job training programs. Schools and school districts are encouraged to work with current employers of students attending instruction in the schools or school districts in order to articulate educational programming with the work experiences of the students. The workstart program is designed to prepare students for employment in occupations which not only require high skill levels but which also offer students opportunities within those occupations for career and personal advancement.

2. a. Each school or school district that desires to establish a workstart program shall appoint a local employment and training council, the members of which shall serve at the pleasure of the board of directors of the district or the authorities in charge of the nonpublic school. The majority of the council members shall be local secondary and postsecondary educators. Other council members shall include, but are not limited to, members of the business community and chamber of commerce, appropriate labor representatives, parents, and representatives from any local municipal, county, state, or federal job placement or training agencies. The council shall identify and assess all of the following:

- (1) The types of high performance workplace employment opportunities for individuals who live in the community.
- (2) The skills, knowledge, and attitudes required by employers for placement in entry level and advanced positions.
- (3) The private and institutional resources necessary and available to provide the appropriate high school training and advanced educational offerings for persons seeking to acquire job skills for the positions.

b. The council, in identifying and assessing high performance workplace employment opportunities, shall consult with local and regional job placement organizations and take into consideration possible job placement trends and opportunities that may become available to program participants. The council shall consult with the vocational regional planning board or consortia to determine what educational resources are available within the merged area and to ascertain the occupational needs of local students. The council shall summarize those jobs, skills, and resources identified and assessed and develop a proposed plan for utilization of available resources to permit the acquisition of those skills in a workstart program. In addition to any agreements with local businesses, the proposed plan for a workstart program shall include an articulated, sequential plan that coordinates and complements the curricula and training available in a secondary education setting with the curricula and training available at the community or private college or other postsecondary training program level. The council shall forward the proposed plan for a workstart program to the board of directors of the school district, or the authorities in charge of the nonpublic school, for review, modification, and approval.

3. a. Each workstart program shall consist of two phases, each of which shall be supervised by an appropriately licensed education practitioner: the preparation phase and the workplace phase.

(1) The preparation phase of a workstart program is a school-based program that provides students with basic and advanced academic skills that will be necessary to perform in a vocational service area chosen by the student. The preparation phase shall also include instruction in skills that are necessary to succeed in high performance workplace employment. The preparation phase of a workstart program shall be directed by education practitioners possessing the appropriate licensing and endorsements for the vocational service area.

(2) The workplace phase of a workstart program shall consist of an intensive workplace-specific training program that may be conducted at a worksite or both at a worksite and in the school setting. The workplace phase of a workstart program shall be coordinated by an education practitioner possessing the appropriate license and endorsements for the vocational service area, and may be directed at the worksite by persons employed in the occupational training area which has been selected by the student.

b. Both the preparation and workplace phases shall be articulated with United States department of labor-approved apprenticeship programs and other postsecondary educational and training offerings that permit participating students to obtain advanced training and education that may be necessary upon graduation from the workstart secondary education program or to obtain an advancement in an occupational field chosen by the student during the student's participation in a workstart secondary education program.

4. Each workstart program shall include a written agreement by the school or school district with one or more businesses from the surrounding community to provide workplace-specific training and learning programs which are related to the skills needed to succeed in those occupational areas. The proposed plan for implementation of the workstart program shall include a copy of the written agreement between the school or school district and the business or businesses and a business support component, which shall consist of financial or in-kind support, or both financial and in-kind support, from the businesses that have entered into the agreement with the school or school district.

5. The state board of education shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A to provide for the implementation of this section.

6. The department of education shall adopt guidelines for the establishment of workstart programs. Guidelines may include, but are not limited to, acceptable levels of business financial participation in a workstart program, maximum hour and workload guidelines for education practitioners working in or supervising a workstart program, and maximum and minimum class size guidelines for the preparation and workplace phases of a workstart program.

7. A school or local school district that implements a workstart program shall annually conduct a survey which counts the number of students who participate in, or graduate from, the program that are actually employed in an occupational area for which they received training. The school or school district shall disseminate the results of the surveys to the local employment and training councils for the school or school district and the department of education.

92 Acts, ch 1198, §3; 2003 Acts, ch 180, §12; 2010 Acts, ch 1061, §180