



Student Information

What is Career Opportunities On Location (COOL) Week?

COOL Week is a work-based learning experience. You will be placed in a business or agency for one-two day or a full week in a career field that you may otherwise not necessarily have access to observe. The goal is for your placement to last for a full week, therefore, you will see much more than an isolated view of a business or agency. However, due to the nature of their work some businesses can only accommodate students for a one or two day period. This program is called COOL Week because it gives you new **C**areer knowledge and skills through **O**pportunities provided **O**n a job **L**ocation rather than in the classroom setting. It will also give you a chance to apply and observe in a job setting what you have been learning at Leander High School.

How are the COOL Week sites selected?

Selection is based on the need for specific occupational strands, the performance and leadership of the business or agency, and the willingness of key personnel to commit to the planning and participation for the week.

What will happen during COOL Week?

Each business and agency has its own specific way of presenting COOL Week. There are, however, some activities we consider essential components and should be a part of all programs:

1. **Orientation:** On the first day you will fill out a job application and be given an interview and critique. You will then be given an orientation to the business or agency to learn the purpose of their operation.
2. **The focus project or problem:** For week long assignments, you will be presented with a problem or project that will be your focus for the week. The problem or project may be a team problem or it may be one you work on individually. Throughout the week you should be gathering information to help you solve the problem. The activities planned for you by the business should also help you solve the problem or complete the project.
3. **Job shadowing:** This activity involves watching an individual or group of employees perform their jobs. In some cases you may be able to perform some tasks, but safety restrictions may prohibit some hands-on activities.
4. **Related projects:** Businesses and agencies have been encouraged to get students involved with hands-on activities. This may not be related to the job shadowing experience, but should give you a chance to be productive.
5. **Related activities:** Depending on the schedule of the business or agency, you may be involved in meetings, trips to other facilities, or other activities which are a part of the daily operation at your site. Try to relate all of your experiences to the problem or question you are trying to solve.

6. **The presentation:** On Friday morning you will be given time to meet with your group members and to prepare a presentation for the business or agency. Each student should give a four-minute presentation to a panel of business or agency representatives on Friday afternoon. A question and answer period will give students and business representatives a chance to react informally to the problem or question.

What kind of preparation will you receive?

Your career passport area and/or your career preference will be the basis of your assignment to a work site. This means that you have completed or are enrolled in coursework that prepares you for this assignment. You will have learned how to write a resume and have practiced job interviews in your English classes.

Additionally, all students going to COOL Week will attend a workshop to prepare for the weeks' activities. You will receive information about the work site to which you are assigned and you will learn the names of the other students on your team. The work site information will include the name of the business or agency, name and telephone number of the Site Coordinator, street address, directions to the site, dress code, parking information, and information about what you need to do for lunch.

A handbook, which you must complete and return after COOL Week, will be issued to you to record information in and answer questions about your experience.

What is the handbook for?

The first part of the handbook will be used for the **Training** you will undergo to prepare you for COOL Week. It gives you general information about work site expectations and includes some of the information-gathering tools you will need to solve your problem. The second part gives you **General Information** about COOL Week. The next two sections called **Daily Questions** and **Presentation** give you a place to enter information, which will help you in your presentation. The **SCANS** section asks you to identify a skill or competency you see being performed at your site each day. The last part of the handbook, **Student Evaluation**, should be completed before you turn in your handbook.

Is that all there is?

Handbooks should be turned in to the first English class period after COOL Week. We would like you to write a thank you letter to either the site program coordinator or to one or more of your work supervisors. You may want to mail the letter yourself or you can give it to them before you leave the work site on Friday. If you write the letter after Friday, give it to your Transition Coordinator they will see that it gets to your site.

A great deal of work will go into the preparation for COOL Week. The businesses and agencies will plan activities that will provide you with new knowledge about the world of work and your future. This is also a chance for prospective employers to see the high quality of your work, which may lead to internships or summer job offers. All of us at Leander ISD have high expectations for you during this week.