

# Teacher Externships

## Educator Planning Guide

*Personalized Professional Development for Career and Technical Education (CTE) Teachers*



# Introduction

## What is a Teacher Externship?

A teacher externship is a professional development opportunity available to career and technical education (CTE) teachers in South Dakota, looking to enhance their knowledge and skills through a personalized experience. Like an internship or a job shadow for students, externships offer educators a hands-on, career connected learning experience with an industry or community partner, in a peer-to-peer learning environment. CTE teachers are constantly updating their own knowledge and skills about current workplace practices, requirements, and trends to better equip their students for college and career success. Educators use what they learn during their Externship experience to enhance their CTE classroom content with the most up-to-date information from the workforce.

## Why Participate in a Teacher Externship?

There are many benefits to participating in a Teacher Externship experience. As a truly personalized form of professional development, a Teacher Externship experience can:

- Enrich career-connected classroom pedagogy
- Enhance industry and education relationships
- Increase opportunities for student work-based learning opportunities
- Build CTE programs that are adaptive and innovative
- Increase teacher efficacy

# Getting Started

## How to Implement a Teacher Externship Experience

Because the nature of the Teacher Externship experience is that of a personalized professional development opportunity, there is no singular “best way” to structure the experience. However, successful Teacher Externships tend to include the same components to ensure a high-quality experience.

- Application/Selection Process
- Planning Guide
- Experience Reflection
- Industry Partner Follow-up

The Teacher Externship Playbook includes details of each of these components with examples and templates. However, for a Teacher Externship to be truly meaningful, it must be personalized to meet the needs of both the teacher and the industry or community partner supporting the Experience. Additionally, a successful Teacher Externship Experience is going to result in improved student outcomes in the CTE classroom.

To help plan and implement a successful Teacher Externship, the following Planning Guides have been created.

### **Educator Planning Guide**

Guidance for educators wanting to participate in a Teacher Externship Experience.

### **District Planning Guide**

Guidance for districts or consortiums wanting to implement a Teacher Externship Experience.

### **Industry Partner Planning Guide**

Guidance for business and industry partners wanting to implement or participate in a Teacher Externship Experience.

# Teacher Planning Guide

The planning guide should be utilized to help ensure the Teacher Externship is successfully implemented and mutually beneficial for the educator and the industry partner helping support the experience. While each experience will be uniquely different, all teacher externship experiences should include thorough research, planning and reflection to ensure effective CTE focused professional development is occurring. This is especially true for districts that plan to utilize Perkins funding to support the CTE Teacher Externship.

High-quality Teacher Externship experiences should include the following four phases.

<b>Phase 1: Self-Assessment &amp; Goal Setting</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Evaluate current classroom and professional development needs.</li><li>● Set goals for what you want to gain from the experience.</li></ul>
<b>Phase 2: Action Planning</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Connect with industry or community partners.</li><li>● Create a list of learning activities, timeline, and other resources/materials needed.</li></ul>
<b>Phase 3: Externship Experience</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Ensure all district and industry partner requirements are met prior to the experience.</li><li>● Participate in the Teacher Externship experience.</li></ul>
<b>Phase 4: Reflection &amp; Follow-up</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Reflect on the experience and incorporate experience into the CTE classroom.</li><li>● Follow-up with industry partner and submit any district or industry partner requirements.</li></ul>

# Self-Assessment & Goal Setting

The [ACTE Quality CTE Programs of Study Framework \(2018\)](#) outlines a 12 component framework that defines high-quality career and technical education. The following 5 components should be used to help evaluate a CTE program's strengths and needs and create an action plan for a Teacher Externship experience.

- Engaging Instruction (Component 5)
- Facilities, Equipment, Technology & Materials (Component 7)
- Business and Community Partnerships (Component 8)
- Career Development (Component 9)
- Work-based Learning (Component 11)

Use this downloadable [Self-Evaluation Instrument](#) to help determine which components to focus on for your experience.

## **Other questions to consider when completing a self-assessment:**

- Q.** Am I teaching the most up-to-date industry knowledge and skills?
- Q.** Does my program utilize the latest industry technologies?
- Q.** Are there certain courses in my approved CTE program students are asking for that I would like to learn more about?
- Q.** How connected is my classroom to industry and community partners?

# Action Planning

The next step is to create a detailed action plan for the Teacher Externship experience using insight gained from the self-evaluation and any professional goals that were set. The following components should be a part of the Teacher Externship Action Plan.

**1. What are Teacher Externship expected outcomes/objectives?**

What do you hope to get out of the externship experience and how will this translate to improving instruction in your CTE classroom? Include curriculum, assignments, or projects you hope to develop through this experience.

**2. When will Teacher Externship be completed?**

Externships can be done at any time. If your district recognizes a Teacher Externship experience as a valid professional development opportunity, it can even be done during the school year. How many hours or days will you spend in the workplace? It is recommended that educators spend no less than 2 days, or 16 hours at an Externship experience.

**3. What are the planned activities?**

What will you do during the Teacher Externship? For example - structured interviews with various departments such as Human Resources or Research & Development, work alongside someone sharing their day-to-day responsibilities, observe a team working together, learn a particular skill?

**4. What continued collaboration is planned?**

What ways do you plan to continue to collaborate and connect with the business to help support career-connected learning in your classroom?

**5. What additional support is needed (if any)?**

Are there any additional supports or resources needed to have a successful experience?

# Teacher Externship Planning Document

Use the following questions to help plan a successful Teacher Externship Experience.

<p><b>What are the Teacher Externship expected outcomes/objectives?</b></p>
<p><b>How many hours will the experience be? When will the Teacher Externship hours be completed?</b></p>
<p><b>What are the planned activities ?</b></p>
<p><b>What continued collaboration is planned?</b></p>
<p><b>What additional support is needed (if any)?</b></p>

## Teacher Externship Example Email to Potential Partner

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I currently teach at \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_. As a CTE teacher, my role is to help better prepare students for the rapidly changing world of work. This means educating them on industry trends and requirements to enter the careers of their choosing, providing them with the skills development they need to be successful in those careers, and helping connect them to industry professionals like yourself.

Strong industry partnerships are essential to high-quality career and technical education programs and CTE teacher professional development, and our school recently approved something called a Teacher Externship Experience to help ensure I have access to the best professional development opportunities available.

### **The Teacher Externship is:**

1. Designed to expose teachers, like me, to the careers and work environments we are helping to prepare our students for.
2. Like a student internship or job shadow, the Teacher Externship is a hands-on opportunity for me to observe first-hand what you do on a day-to-day basis.
3. An opportunity that would also give me the chance to interact with and ask questions of you and your associates so I can use this information to better inform my lessons and engage my students.

### **What does an Externship look like:**

- Typically, a Teacher Externship is a 2 to 3-day experience that involves me coming to \_\_\_\_\_ and learning more about how the company operates and your job as a \_\_\_\_\_. The days, exact number of hours, and the types of activities I do is 100% flexible depending upon what works best for your schedule.

I would really appreciate the opportunity to talk with you more about this opportunity as I truly believe it is a great way to **help you and your organization connect with the next generation of workers**, and it would be an amazing opportunity for me to be able to bring relevant learning back to my classroom.

If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, I would like to schedule a time to meet with you and share more details or answer any questions that you have.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to getting to speak with you more about this soon!



# Externship Experience

Once a plan has been put in place and an employer successfully identified, use the following resources to help implement a high-quality Teacher Externship Experience.

## Teacher Externship Suggested Activities

1. Visit a variety of departments and talk with multiple employees to obtain a full view of the opportunities available.
2. Tour facilities and departments:
  - Offices, meeting rooms, training facilities
  - Common areas, breakrooms
  - Specific rooms/spaces for various department functions
3. Meet with Human Resources to learn more about:
  - Recruitment Plan
  - Application and interviewing process
  - Benefits and work conditions (hours, PTO, other incentives)
  - Youth internship or youth hiring programs (14-21 year-olds)
  - In-demand credentials, certificates the company is looking for
  - Salary and compensation information
  - Performance and review process
4. Conduct informational interviews with specific employees; obtain information on:
  - Educational and skills requirements for their position (including future needs)
  - The career path they took
  - What “a day in the life...” looks like for them at work
  - Most challenging parts of their job
  - What qualities and skills they look for in a coworker
  - The components of their job/industry they like the most
  - Trends or changes in the industry someone interested in the field should know
5. Perform some job duties (if allowable) under the supervision of someone who can provide orientation and training in that job.
6. Observe all activities allowable.

# Teacher Externship Experience Audit (Example Template)

Use this template/tool to help guide your experience.

## Skills and Knowledge at Work

Through interviews, observations, or hands-on experiences, identify examples of:

Technical Skills and Training /Credentials Required for the Job
Soft Skills Required for the Job (Communication, Cooperation, Connection)
Standards in Action (evidence of what students are learning in school connects to the job)
Solving Problems or Overcoming Challenges

# Teacher Externship Experience Agreement

It is useful (and sometimes necessary) to have some type of agreement between the teacher and the industry partner host during an Externship Experience to ensure that both parties have a clear understanding of expectations and outcomes. Externships may be set up directly by a teacher, the teacher's school, or district, or through community organizations. Use the following list of example expectations to help draft an Experience Agreement that can be used as a formal agreement between the teacher and the industry partner and any other entities supporting the Experience.

## ***Basic Teacher Expectations***

- Contact business/industry/community partners to set up Externship.
- Attend orientation meeting(s) with the organizing entity and/or Externship host.
- Complete informational interviews with the key people during the Externship.
- Adhere to all company policies and procedures while at the placement site.
- Complete reflection during/at the conclusion of the Externship.
- Develop at least one lesson plan based on the Externship Experience using the standards for your subject matter
- Present on your experience to other colleagues or business partners
- Write follow-up thank you and any plans for continued industry partnerships to the externship host
- Notify the organizing entity of any problems that arise out of the externship

## Teacher Externship Media Release (Example Template)

Taking photos or videos of the worksite and employees during a Teacher Externship can provide valuable evidence of the experience for teachers to share with their colleagues and students. We ask that you consider granting permission (or partial permission) to use these photographs and/or videos in teacher created curriculum, on the school website, in school newsletters or school sponsored social media, in brochures, in presentations, or in any other way the school uses to promote Industry Partnerships, and the Teacher Externship Experience. The photographs will never be sold and will be used exclusively for educational purposes.

YES. I grant you permission to use photos taken during the teacher externship.

NO. Please do NOT take or use any photos.

YES, with the following exceptions:

---

---

---

Organization (Name, Address, Phone #)

---

Company Representative (Name & Job Title)

---

Company Representative Signature

Date

---

Teacher (Name & Contact)

---

Teacher Signature

Date

## Teacher Externship Checklist (Example)

- Conduct basic research on the company to help prepare for your experience.
- Call the host site the day before to confirm logistics for the experience (time, arrival location, parking, worksite requirements, etc.).
- Read/review the company handbook prior to Experience.
- Wear appropriate attire for the host site.
- Arrive and leave at the agreed upon time.
- Follow all company guidelines and rules of confidentiality.
- Act in a professional way that represents yourself, your school district, and the company at all times.
- Stay actively engaged.
- Bring a copy of the work plan to the host site.
- Ask questions and give employees time to answer; take notes.
- Be enthusiastic about what you see and can do.
- Go beyond the needs of your own classroom and keep in mind others in your school community or CTE department who may benefit from information learned.
- Thank people you visit with for hosting your Externship Experience.
- Send follow up thank you notes and address any future Work-based Learning plans between the industry partner and your classroom.

## Teacher Externship Timesheet (Example Template)

Some Teacher Externship programs may require the teacher to maintain documentation of the time/hours spent onsite at the host industry partner's place of work. A simple time form, signed by the industry partner mentor or the Human Resource Specialist should be kept. The following example can be used as a template or as guidance for creating a timesheet for your program.

Date	Time In	Time Out	Industry Host Representative Name & Initials
			<b>Total Hours</b>

I certify that \_\_\_\_\_ was participating in  
*Name of Teacher*  
 the agreed upon Teacher Externship Experience, either directly under my supervision or  
 under the supervision of the following employee(s) \_\_\_\_\_.

---

Company Representative Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

---

Teacher Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Reflection & Follow-up

A critical component to all professional development and learning is the reflection stage. Use the following resources to help facilitate reflection and follow-up at the end of a Teacher Externship Experience

## Teacher Externship Reflection Questions (Example)

Whether to help fulfill the requirements of a Professional Growth Plan (PGP), a requirement for continued education units (CEUs) or graduate credit, or to help a teacher implement their learning into high-quality, career-connected lesson plans, the following questions can be used to help guide the reflection stage of the Teacher Externship Experience.

1. How was the Experience connected to the content you teach in your CTE classroom?
2. How do you plan to incorporate the skills and knowledge you learned during the Experience into your CTE classroom?
3. What workplace readiness skills seemed to be the most important to your industry partner or from the employees you observed and spoke with?
4. What do you think were the most important takeaways from this Experience?
5. Describe an “ah-ha” moment you experienced during your Externship?
6. Was there anything that could have made the Experience more meaningful to you?
7. What challenges or barriers did you encounter during your Experience?
8. What advice would you give to another educator considering the Teacher Externship Experience as a form of professional development?

## Teacher Externship Skills Reflection For (Example Template)

Use the following resource to help you note any skills and competencies you observed during your Experience. Then, indicate the ways these skills and competencies could be translated into an applicable classroom activity or lesson.

<b>Skills &amp; Competencies</b>	<b>How the Skill/Competency is being Used</b>	<b>Classroom Application of the Skill</b>
<b>Speaking &amp; Listening</b>		
<b>Cooperation Teamwork</b>		
<b>Customer Service</b>		
<b>Critical Thinking/ Problem Solving</b>		
<b>Conflict Resolution</b>		
<b>Initiative/ Self-Direction</b>		
<b>Workplace Safety</b>		
<b>Time Management</b>		
<b>Adaptability</b>		
<b>Continued Learning</b>		
<b>Core Academic Skills (reading, writing, mathematics, etc.)</b>		



## Teacher Externship Thank You Email (Example Template)

Good Afternoon \_\_\_\_\_,

I wanted to reach out once more to say thank you for your time and willingness to host me during my Teacher Externship Experience. I learned so much about the work that you do at \_\_\_\_\_, and I observed a variety of skills and competencies I plan to implement in my \_\_\_\_\_ class. The experience was also so valuable for helping me to better understand the industry trends in \_\_\_\_\_ and what my students will need from me to help prepare them for a successful future in the \_\_\_\_\_ industry.

I truly hope that we can continue to work together to help provide additional Work-based Learning opportunities to my students in the future. Thank you again for your support.

# Teacher Externship Lesson Plan (Example Template)

<b>Objectives</b>		<b>CTE Standards</b>	
<b>Resources/Materials</b>	<b>Guest Speaker</b>	<b>Notes</b>	
<b>Lesson Opener/Bellringer</b>			
<b>Main Lesson/Activities</b>			
<b>Closing/Wrap-up</b>		<b>Continued Learning and/or Assessment</b>	

# Perkins Guidance

Teacher Externships can be considered a form of professional development if *“training or instruction provided by an organization outside the school district which directly correlates to CTE course instruction. If aligned to the teacher’s CTE content area and CEU contact hours, CEUs, undergrad credit or grad credit is available, the professional development will be approvable.”* [Using Perkins Funds to Support CTE Programs](#)

CTE Teachers may be able to utilize Perkins funding to help support the Teacher Externship Experience if certain criteria are met.

**Is the educator participating in a school district or consortium sponsored externship experience?**

**Yes →** The teacher may be eligible to access Perkins funding for their experience.

**No →** The teacher may NOT utilize Perkins funding for their experience.

**Is the educator teaching district approved Career and Technical Education courses that are relevant to the experience that they will be participating in during this experience?**

**Yes →** The teacher may be eligible to access Perkins funding for their experience.

**No →** The teacher may NOT utilize Perkins funding for their experience.

**Is the educator being compensated by the industry partner for their time during the experience?**

**No →** The teacher may be eligible to access Perkins funding for their experience.

**Yes →** The teacher may NOT utilize Perkins funding for their experience.

**Is the externship experience outside of the contract year (over the summer months)?**

**No →** The teacher may be eligible to access Perkins funding for their experience.

**Yes →** The teacher may NOT utilize Perkins funding for their experience.

**Perkins allowable expenses for district or consortium sponsored Teacher Externships.**

- Hourly Stipend for Externship Time (Up to 40 hours max)
- Travel expenses for continuous days of Externships more than 60 miles from a teacher’s home. Externships must be 6-8 hour days during travel. Only in-state travel is allowable.
  - Mileage, Lodging, Meals. (District Approved rates)

Included is general guidance for if a Teacher Externship experience is an allowable use of Perkins funds. More detailed guidance on use of funds for CTE professional development can be found on the Department of Education’s website <https://doe.sd.gov/cte/perkins.aspx>

Best Practice Use of Perkins Funds for Professional Development for CTE Teachers (Allowable use of funds)	CTE Needs Covered by District (Not allowable use of funds)
<p><b>CTE Content Specific</b> Professional Development must be specific to the teacher’s content area and courses taught.</p>	<p><b>General Education</b> Professional Development which is Non-Specific to CTE Content.</p>
<p><b>Stipends</b> For CTE teachers to attend professional development ONLY if PD occurs outside of the district’s contract year.</p>	<p><b>Stipends</b> Stipends for CTE Teachers to attend Professional Development within the local district’s contract year.</p>
<p><b>Transportation</b> Includes mileage from home to airport, flight to and from meeting location, taxi from airport to hotel and back to airport, taxi or rideshare expenses from hotel to conference center (if at a different location) or meeting location. Travel costs must follow district or consortium policy as agreed upon.</p>	<p><b>Graduate Credit</b> Cost of Graduate Credit offered as a part of the Professional Development.</p>
<p><b>Meals and Lodging</b> District or consortium approved per diem meal rates for CTE instructors while attending approved CTE professional development Hotel expenses for CTE instructors while attending approved CTE professional development.</p>	<p><b>Non CTE Teacher Participation</b> If non CTE teachers are participating in the same professional development opportunity.</p>

# Teacher Externship Reimbursement Form (Example Template)

Please use this form to submit for reimbursement with your district or consortium.

District:  Name:

Event:  Date(s):

## Reimbursable Travel Expenses

(Includes: Mileage, Tickets, Meals, Parking Fees, Stipend)

Item (Select)	Quantity	Rate	Total
			\$-
			\$-
			\$-
			\$-
			\$-
			\$-
			\$-
			\$-
			\$-
			\$-
<b>Total:</b>			<b>\$-</b>

Submitter:  Date:

Pay To (Indicate District or Person's Name):