Teacher Externship Program Implementation Guide

Gulf Coast Workforce Board
Program Year 2026-2027

Introduction

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board (GCWB) Teacher Externship Program is designed to strengthen the connection between education and industry by providing educators with immersive workplace experiences in high-demand sectors. Through participation in employer-hosted externships, educators gain firsthand knowledge of workforce expectations, industry trends, and career pathways that can be integrated into classroom instruction.

This guide was developed to provide participating educators, employers, school districts, and program partners with clear expectations, requirements, procedures, and responsibilities necessary for successful implementation of the Teacher Externship Program.

The guide serves as an operational resource and should be used alongside all applicable grant requirements, district policies, and Gulf Coast Workforce Board procedures.

Program Overview

Program Goals

The Teacher Externship Program aims to:

- Strengthen partnerships between education and industry.
- Increase educator awareness of workforce trends and labor market demands.
- Improve student career awareness and readiness.
- Develop TEKS-aligned, industry-informed lesson plans.
- Support regional workforce development priorities.
- Promote interdisciplinary learning that connects classroom content to real-world careers.

Priority Industry Sectors

Externships will be conducted within the following priority industries:

- Healthcare
- Construction and Skilled Trades
- Technology
- Education

Additional sectors may be added based on labor market demand and employer participation.

Teacher Externship Requirements

Participating Educators

Selected educators must:

- Attend all required orientation sessions.
- Complete all assigned externship hours.
- Participate in employer activities.
- Maintain attendance documentation.
- Complete required surveys and evaluations.
- Submit at least one TEKS-aligned lesson plan.
- Implement the developed lesson plan during the academic year.
- Participate in follow-up activities and reporting.

Minimum Participation Requirements

Requirement	Minimum Standard
Externship Duration	10 to 15 days
Daily Participation	Minimum 4 hours
Orientation Attendance	Required
Lesson Plan Submission	Required
Reflection Activities	Required
Surveys	Required

Orientation Requirements

Educator Orientation

Prior to beginning an externship, educators will attend a mandatory orientation covering:

- Program goals and expectations
- Workforce development overview
- Employer expectations
- Safety requirements
- Attendance procedures
- Stipend requirements
- Lesson plan development
- Labor Market Information (LMI)
- Reporting requirements

Employer Orientation

Employer partners will receive training regarding:

- Program objectives
- Educator engagement strategies
- Mentor responsibilities
- Attendance verification procedures
- Safety and liability expectations
- Evaluation requirements

Curriculum Mentor Orientation

Curriculum Mentors will receive training related to:

- Program deliverables
- Coaching educators
- Lesson plan development
- Monitoring participant progress
- Reporting requirements
- Evaluation procedures

Labor Market Information Training

All educators are required to participate in Labor Market Information (LMI) training provided by GCWB staff.

Training topics include:

- Regional workforce demand
- High-growth occupations
- Wage and earnings data
- Industry trends
- Postsecondary pathways
- Workforce readiness competencies

The purpose of this training is to help educators integrate workforce relevance into classroom instruction.

Attendance Requirements

Attendance is a critical component of successful program participation.

Educators must:

- Attend all scheduled externship days.
- Sign in and out daily.
- Participate in all required activities.
- Notify program staff of absences immediately.

Attendance Verification

Attendance will be verified through:

- Daily sign-in/sign-out logs
- Employer verification
- Curriculum Mentor monitoring
- GCWB attendance reviews

Failure to complete required hours may affect stipend eligibility.

Lesson Plan Requirements

A primary deliverable of the Teacher Externship Program is the creation of industry-informed instructional materials.

Each participant must develop a lesson plan that:

- Aligns with TEKS.
- Incorporates industry knowledge gained during the externship.
- Includes workforce readiness concepts.
- Demonstrates real-world application.
- Supports career exploration.

Lesson Plan Development Support

Participants will receive:

- Lesson plan templates
- Curriculum Mentor support
- Industry partner feedback
- Workforce data resources

Stipend Requirements

Classroom Supplies Stipend

Educators who successfully complete program requirements may receive a:

$500 Classroom Supplies Stipend

The stipend is intended to support:

- Instructional materials
- Classroom resources
- Technology tools
- Student engagement activities

Participation Stipend

Educators will receive a:

$1,500 Participation Stipend

Requirements include:

- Completion of externship hours
- Attendance verification
- Submission of lesson plan
- Completion of reflection activities
- Submission of required surveys

Lesson Implementation Stipend

An additional:

$500 Implementation Stipend

May be awarded after:

- Lesson implementation
- Verification by Curriculum Mentor
- Submission of implementation documentation

Payment Schedule and Requirements

Educators who successfully complete the Program and fulfill all established requirements may be eligible to receive stipends totaling up to $2,500, disbursed across three milestones as outlined below, subject to GCWB verification and approval (including approval in GCWB's CRM, as applicable), compliance with applicable grant requirements, and any additional requirements and authorizations established by GCWB. GCWB may withhold, reduce, delay, or deny any stipend payment if GCWB determines in good faith that requirements have not been met or that payment is not permitted under applicable grant requirements or available funding.

Participation Stipend — $1,500

Disbursement Timing: Issued upon completion of the externship requirements (minimum 40 total hours).

Method of Delivery: Direct Deposit

Eligibility Requirements (GCWB will verify):

- Verified attendance and active participation in all externship activities.
- Submission of a completed lesson plan informed by the externship experience, in the format/template specified by GCWB.
- Completion of a post-externship reflection.

Classroom Supplies Stipend — $500

Disbursement Timing: Issued at the conclusion of the externship requirements (minimum 40 total hours).

Method of Delivery: Prepaid card

Eligibility Requirements (GCWB will verify):

- Funds must be used exclusively for classroom-related purchases that support student learning and instruction.
- Allowable expenditures include:
  - Instructional materials.
  - Technology tools.
  - Student engagement resources.
- Purchases must directly support the development and implementation of externship-informed lesson plans and may be subject to verification (including submission of receipts or supporting documentation upon request by GCWB).

Implementation Stipend — $500

Disbursement Timing: Issued following classroom implementation of the externship-based lesson plan.

Method of Delivery: Direct Deposit

Eligibility Requirements (GCWB will verify):

- Delivery of the lesson plan, in the applicable instructional setting, in accordance with GCWB requirements and any applicable timelines communicated by GCWB.
- Verification of implementation as required by GCWB, which may include verification by the assigned Curriculum Mentor in coordination with GCWB staff, provided that final approval is by GCWB/Board staff.

Curriculum Mentor Responsibilities

Curriculum Mentors support educator success throughout the program.

Responsibilities include:

- Attending orientation
- Monitoring externship activities
- Reviewing lesson plans
- Conducting participant check-ins
- Supporting implementation activities

- Verifying completion requirements

Curriculum Mentor Stipend

Each Curriculum Mentor receives a total stipend of **$4,000**, distributed across two phases of the program:

Payment Schedule and Requirements:

Curriculum Mentors who successfully complete the Externship Program and fulfill all requirements may be eligible to receive stipends totaling up to $4,000, disbursed across three phases as outlined below; stipends are not guaranteed.

Phase 1 – Onboarding & Externship Support — $1,000

Disbursement Timing: Issued following GCWB verification/approval in GCWB's CRM of Phase 1 documentation and satisfaction of applicable grant requirements.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Completion of all required onboarding and orientation activities and submission of all required Phase 1 documentation;
- Participation in cohort preparation sessions;
- Active oversight and coordination of the externship experience;
- Provision of ongoing support to educators throughout the externship period.

For clarity, "documentation" may include (as applicable to the Phase): completion certificates and attendance records for required onboarding/orientation, mentor activity logs, educator support/check-in records, lesson plan review and feedback forms, classroom implementation verification forms, surveys, and final monitoring/evaluation reports, in each case in the form and manner requested by GCWB.

Phase 2 – Monitoring, Feedback & Classroom Verification — $1,000

Disbursement Timing: Issued following GCWB verification/approval in GCWB's CRM of Phase 2 documentation and satisfaction of applicable grant requirements.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Monitoring educator participation and progress throughout the Program;
- Review of and provision of feedback on educator-developed lesson plans;
- Verification of classroom implementation of externship-informed instruction;

- Completion and timely submission of all required Phase 2 documentation.

Phase 3 – Final Reporting & Closeout — $2,000

- Disbursement Timing: Issued following GCWB verification/approval in GCWB's CRM of Phase 3 documentation and satisfaction of applicable grant requirements.
- Eligibility Requirements:
- Successful completion of all remaining mentor responsibilities and timely submission of all required final documentation.

Employer Responsibilities

Employer partners play a critical role in the program.

Responsibilities include:

- Hosting externship participants
- Providing meaningful workplace experiences
- Assigning staff mentors
- Verifying attendance
- Participating in evaluations
- Sharing industry information and resources

Employers should provide exposure to:

- Workplace operations
- Industry technology
- Career pathways
- Professional expectations
- Workforce skills

School District/Organizational Partner Responsibilities

Participating organizations shall:

- Promote the program to educators.
- Support educator participation.
- Assist with recruitment efforts.
- Facilitate communication with school leadership.
- Support lesson implementation activities.
- Participate in program evaluation activities.

Program Evaluation

Program evaluation is essential to continuous improvement.

Evaluation Activities

Educators will complete:

Pre-Externship Survey

Measures:

- Workforce knowledge
- Industry familiarity
- Career readiness confidence

Post-Externship Survey

Measures:

- Knowledge gained
- Instructional impact
- Program satisfaction

Reflection Activities

Participants will document:

- Observations
- Industry insights
- Instructional applications
- Student impact

Employer Feedback

Employers will provide:

- Participant engagement feedback
- Program recommendations
- Future partnership interest

Outcomes and Performance Measures

GCWB tracks program effectiveness using the following measures.

Educator Outcomes

- Externship completion
- Lesson plan development
- Lesson plan implementation
- Increased workforce knowledge

Student Outcomes

- Increased career awareness
- Enhanced workforce readiness understanding
- Greater engagement in career-connected learning

Employer Outcomes

- Increased school partnerships
- Enhanced community engagement

- Stronger talent pipeline awareness

Data Privacy and Confidentiality

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board is committed to protecting Personally Identifiable Information (PII).

All staff, mentors, and program partners shall:

- Follow confidentiality requirements.
- Complete required data privacy training.
- Protect participant information.
- Store records securely.
- Report potential data breaches immediately.

Program records will be maintained in accordance with federal, state, and local requirements.

Reporting Requirements

The Teacher Externship Program requires documentation and reporting throughout the grant period.

Required reports may include:

- Attendance reports
- Participation records
- Lesson plan submissions
- Survey results
- Expenditure documentation
- Final program outcomes

Program Timeline

Spring 2026

- Recruitment

- Employer Engagement
- Educator Selection

July to November 2026

- Orientation
- Labor Market Information Training
- Externship Experiences

October 2026-January 2027

- Lesson Implementation

February 2027

- Final Reporting and Program Evaluation