



Kent ISD Career Readiness

# Kent ISD Explorers

Employer Information Packet



**Kent ISD**  
*We Lead Learning*

# Overview

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## Program Goals

Kent ISD's Explorers Program is designed to increase student awareness of the diverse careers available and to expand the talent pipeline in the Kent County area. Students will participate in weekly job shadows around the Grand Rapids area to better understand the skills required for success, the academic training needed, the different working environments available, and the career paths that exist for those interested in the spotlighted fields.

## What are the benefits of job-shadowing?

For employers:

- Showcases your place of work by increasing visibility in your community
- Prepares our future work force
- Informs students about career in your industry or line of work
- Enables employees to easily participate in a community activity
- Strengthens and promotes involvement in education

For employees:

- Introduce the world of work to a young person in just a few hours
- Become a positive adult role model
- Showcases the volunteer's skills and education
- Impact a young person's life in a fun way

For students:

- Explore career options of their choice
- Find out what fields of interest are like in real life
- Make well-informed career decisions
- Deepen their understanding of the demands, rewards, and challenges of a chosen career
- Gain an overview of the world of work and career opportunities available
- Formulate realistic career goals
- Understand the connection between school, work, and their goals for the future

# What should we expect when students arrive?

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The objective of this shadowing experience is to allow students to view “a day in the life” of some of your employees (mentors) and learn about your company and industry. Below are some suggestions to make the scheduled afternoons enjoyable for both student and mentors.

## Welcome/Introductions *(first afternoon)*

- ✓ Have a designated representative welcome your students the first afternoon. Depending on the size of your company, you may want to assign someone to serve as a guide, getting students from one place to the next.
- ✓ Begin the day with an overview of your company, its core business, and vision.
- ✓ Provide a tour of your workplace/offices, and clarify any behavioral issues, rules, permissions, clothing, and safety requirements.
- ✓ Identify other staff and departments that students may meet/shadow over the three afternoons (students will benefit from hearing multiple perspectives students).
- ✓ Make students feel welcome and part of your team. Little things like having a company name badge made up for them, or providing them with a notebook with company materials can go a long way in making them feel less nervous!

## During the Job Shadow *(across all three afternoons)*

- ✓ Staff who interact with students should be prepared to explain their current/past roles with the company and the associated responsibilities. Engage in brief discussion of: different departmental functions, job titles, educational preparation, pay ranges, and relationships between suppliers and customers as applicable.
- ✓ Encourage students to talk about their interests and abilities. Incorporate that information into discussions about employment choices or offer suggestions for training or experience.
- ✓ Visuals are worth a thousand words! With safety in mind, show or demonstrate what happens at your company whenever possible. For example, students could be given an opportunity to perform a function/task or be allowed to sit in on a team meeting.
- ✓ Show them the industry tools which include from software, actual equipment, or even the "people skills" necessary in your line of work.
- ✓ Discuss math, science, and communication foundations of the job.
- ✓ Consider providing students with any resources that you think may be helpful to their exploration of your industry.
- ✓ Meet students where they are in their varying levels of career maturity; clarify misconceptions and support them in their efforts to explore the industry..

### Questions Students May Ask

There will likely be others, but mentors may want to share with students responses related to the following questions:

1. When did you decide to pursue a career in this field?
2. What other jobs did you consider before deciding on this one?
3. What skills and education are required for your current position?
4. What do you like most about your job?
5. What do you like least about your job?
6. What is a typical day like? What are your hours/days of work?
7. What personal qualities or abilities are important to being successful in this job?
8. Do you work alone or on team most often?
9. What can cause stress in this job?
10. What is your perception of the job outlook for this career?
11. What are some of the surprises you have had in this job?
12. Were you employed in another profession before coming into this position?
13. If so, why did you change professions?
14. What kind of training do companies like yours provide incoming employees? What do you expect to be learned beforehand?
15. What advice would you give to those considering this same career?

### Concerns

At any time, should staff have any concerns with the content of the job shadow or behavior of student placements, please contact Amy Pierce (616.447.5691, [amypierce@kentisd.org](mailto:amypierce@kentisd.org)) or Lindsey Tilley (616.447-5690, [lindseytilley@kentisd.org](mailto:lindseytilley@kentisd.org)). In the event of an on-site emergency, refer to the Emergency Contact forms provided for each student.

# Employer Safety Guidelines

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Also found in the Employer Participation Agreement, the following standards are presented to help employers understand the practices expected of them as sponsors of student job shadow experiences in the Kent ISD Explorers Program. While these standards seem to be self-evident, it is important to list them. Students and parents will also be made aware of these guidelines during orientation before the program begins.

## Conduct Standards

Sponsors should instruct their employees or volunteers to not:

- Have any inappropriate contact with any student met through their job shadowing, including those students 18 years of age or older.
- Engage in any job shadowing experience with any student without the prior consent of the student's parents.
- Some examples of inappropriate conduct include, but are not limited to:
  - Violations of state laws regarding child abuse, and/or providing alcohol or controlled substances to minors.
  - Use of profanity or inappropriate language in the classroom or workplace.
  - Physical contact which is inappropriate to a mentor-pupil professional relationship considering the age and sex of the student.

## Facilities Safety

If a student is injured at your worksite, be sure that you or a co-worker refers to the information provided on the emergency contact list provided by Kent ISD. Seek immediate medical attention if necessary and contact the Kent ISD Program Coordinator.

If the injury is not serious, the student may go to his/her own doctor. All injuries, including minor ones, must be reported to Kent ISD.

## Transportation

In general, liability for injuries or accidents during transit rests with the party responsible for transportation. Students and sponsors should meet at the primary location of the employer; sponsors agree to not transport students elsewhere (e.g., job sites, client offices) without prior written consent from students' legal guardians.

## Health and Safety

The Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) regulations that apply to the workplace also apply to the student. The Kent ISD Program Coordinator and employer will define the health and

safety issues at the worksite in advance and coordinate how the necessary safety instruction will be delivered to the students.

### **Non-Discrimination**

Employers are expected to adhere to Kent ISD's non-discrimination policy. "It is the policy of the Kent ISD School Board that no student, staff member or candidate for any position in the District shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, creed, ancestry, age, gender, marital status, height, weight, veteran status, political belief or disability which does not impair their ability to perform adequately in the individual's particular position or activity, excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity for which the Kent ISD School Board is responsible for or receives financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education."

### **Harassment: Sexual and Racial**

Employers should uphold policies and procedures for addressing sexual and racial harassment. All policies that apply to employees should apply to students in job shadows during their experience at the job site. Employers must make it clear that harassment is a serious matter and will not be tolerated. It is important to protect the rights of the students at the workplace and create a safe and supportive environment for learning.