

# Education-Related Professional Learning: Externships

## **Did you know educators can use externships as professional learning to renew educator certificates or licenses?**

With the emphasis on fostering authentic P-20 student experiences and career readiness, as well as exploring career options, pathways and college goals, externships are an exciting opportunity for an educator's professional development. Externships provide real life experiences for educators and help make instruction more relevant to students. In June 2017 the State Superintendent issued an [executive directive](#) to implement recommendations of the Career Pathway Alliance. These opportunities align with statewide vision and goals.

There are many types of meaningful externships, including but not limited to: job shadowing, informational interviewing, in-field experience/observations, service learning, community involvement, and working in an industry. The Michigan Department of Education appreciates the process outlined by the University of California, Berkeley for planning and coordination of externships<sup>1</sup>.

Externships:

- Ensure educators' knowledge and skills remain current in order to adequately prepare students for today's technically enhanced work environments.
- Increase educator awareness and knowledge of labor market trends.
- Give educators a perspective of the skills and knowledge students will need to succeed in today's workplace.
- Increase awareness of career pathway potential in occupational areas.
- Give business professionals and educators an opportunity to have a constructive dialogue.
- Enable businesses to actively support workforce development and make a positive impact on classroom curriculum and instructional practices.

Externships can be considered as education-related professional learning within the [State Continuing Education Clock Hour](#) (SCECH) OR within the local [District Provided Professional Development](#) (DPPD) systems. Additional information can be found in the [Externships as DPPD](#) and [Externships for SCECH](#) guidance documents.

For additional information on using externship experiences for SCECHs or DPPD please contact the Office of Educator Excellence at 517-241-5000 or [MDE-EducatorHelp@michigan.gov](mailto:MDE-EducatorHelp@michigan.gov).

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<sup>1</sup> Career Academy Support Network, University of California, Berkeley, (2010). Teacher Externship Guide. Retrieved from [https://casn.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/resource\\_files/teacher\\_externship\\_guide.pdf](https://casn.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/resource_files/teacher_externship_guide.pdf).