

Better Support for Our Youth

"We have a lot of very talented kids in our community, whether they're in high school, junior high or college. How do we open our doors, from a business perspective, and share career opportunities to get them started on the right path early on?"

– Business Co-Chair of the BEP

"Students have a tendency to not think about their part-time jobs from an educational perspective: 'What am I good at?' 'What could I be trained to be good at?' 'What is the potential in my local community for jobs I enjoy doing?' Instead, they think, 'I need a job and I'm going to get a job.' But, it might be totally unrelated to their career interests. We need to get students to think: 'Any job I do is a learning experience, and the more learning experiences I can have while I'm in school, the better prepared I'll be to choose an occupation.'"

– Education Co-Chair of the BEP

Join the Business Education Partnerships committee to help bridge the connection between education and the business world. The more partnerships we can form, the more experiences we can offer our youth. We ALL will reap the rewards.

For more information about Business Education Partnership opportunities, or to suggest one:

www.nhachamber.com/BEP

763-424-6744

Business Education Partnerships

Mission: To create and convene a forum where education, business and the local community connect as partners to build a common vision and provide resources that support and promote educational, economic, and civil leadership; where all participants experience ownership and success.

North Hennepin Area Chamber of Commerce
Promoting Success... Serving Members



North Hennepin Area Chamber of Commerce



Business Education Partnerships

"Bringing together advocates from business and education to collaborate on activities and partnerships that better prepare students for the ever-changing world of work"

Business-Education Partnerships are Powerful

For over 20 years, hundreds of elementary, high school and college students in the North Hennepin area have gained valuable experience and business insight by participating in the activities of the North Hennepin Area Chamber of Commerce Business Education Partnership Committee (BEP). In turn, hundreds of business representatives involved in these activities have realized valuable benefits for themselves and their businesses.

The Chamber's BEP committee is known for a core collection of programs it has planned and hosted for two decades, including the annual Star Student Awards, Scholarships and Mock Interviews. The lesser-known contribution of this group, and the initiative it aims to build, is the series of committee meetings held monthly throughout the school year.

These meetings offer a unique forum for educators, business representatives and community members to come together to share information about effective programs, special initiatives and best practices, and to arm teachers and businesses with current information on the skills and attributes required for success in the business world.

The committee is co-chaired by two Chamber members – a business executive and an educator. As the committee's current business co-chair says, "Business and education are two different worlds. This committee provides the opportunity to create a bridge between them. The world is changing so rapidly, and this is a way to share with educators and students what requirements and skill sets are going to be needed in the future."

The education co-chair agrees: "Educators need to invite the business community to help us with curriculum and program development to prepare kids for lifelong learning and the world of work. This committee creates opportunities for the two to talk to each other."

Schools the BEP Supports

The BEP primarily serves students in elementary schools, high schools and colleges in the communities served by the North Hennepin Area Chamber: Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, Maple Grove and Osseo. Some events, like the Star Student Awards and Scholarships, also involve students from Champlin Park High School.

Benefits for Businesses

The BEP attracts representatives from the business community with a personal interest in education and a desire to contribute to the community. Business members and their companies realize many benefits from participation, such as:

- ◆ Contributing to the community through school involvement
- ◆ Better understanding of the current education system
- ◆ Gaining a better perspective of the knowledge and skills of today's students
- ◆ Providing information on the skills employers are looking for
- ◆ Identifying better qualified applicants for internships or employment
- ◆ Opportunity to post job openings

How Businesses Can Get Involved

The list is endless, and the BEP would like help refining the best ideas and making them happen. Examples of possible activities include:

- ◆ Career Fairs
- ◆ Classroom speakers
- ◆ Field trips
- ◆ Internships
- ◆ Job shadowing
- ◆ Join the committee
- ◆ Mentors
- ◆ Mock Interviews
- ◆ Tutors

The committee has also undertaken large projects requiring many hours of time, and many small projects that only require a few hours of time. Any project, large or small, reaps benefits for all parties involved. It's just a matter of collectively determining those opportunities that will reap the greatest rewards, and bringing together an excited team of business representatives and educators to carry them out.

Benefits for Schools

The education representatives in the BEP, including professionals in career placement, admissions and administration, among others, realize such benefits as:

- ◆ Better understanding of the requirements of the work world
- ◆ Increased awareness of the needs of business
- ◆ Increased support for schools among business and the community
- ◆ Participation by Chamber members in BEP activities
- ◆ Acquisition of expertise, technical assistance and technology
- ◆ Assistance with resources (human and/or monetary) with support and guidance for students and educators
- ◆ Education outside the walls of the classroom

Annual Events and Activities

The ongoing activities of the BEP include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ◆ **Career Fairs** provide a forum for Chamber businesses and students to share information on employment opportunities.
- ◆ **Classroom Speakers** are arranged on an as-needed basis at many of the schools in the Chamber's service area.
- ◆ **Mock Interviews** pair 60+ Chamber members for face-to-face interviews with the seniors at a local high school.
- ◆ **Scholarships** are awarded to students at each of the high schools and the community and technical colleges in the Chamber's service area.
- ◆ **Star Student Awards** honor 60+ high school seniors for their achievements in four categories: Academics, Employment, Volunteerism and Student Activities.