

Project SEARCH - Eau Claire



High School Transition Program

Contact Us:

Brenda Swoboda

Project SEARCH Instructor
bswoboda@ecasd.us
715-492-7008

Kelsey Tichey

Assistant Director of Special Education
Ktichey@ecasd.us
Office: 715-852-3072 Cell: 715-563-3198

Our Social Media:

Instagram: @projectsearchec
Facebook: Project SEARCH - Eau Claire

Project SEARCH Curriculum

Throughout the school year, interns participate in a functional academic curriculum that stresses employability and independent living skills. Project SEARCH activities are designed around eight major focus areas:

- 1) Team Building
- 2) Workplace Safety
- 3) Technology
- 4) Self-Advocacy
- 5) Preparing for Employment
- 6) Financial Literacy
- 7) Health and Wellness
- 8) Maintaining Employment

The curriculum is flexible and allows the teacher to design lessons around the core topics and adjust the curriculum as needed based on specific intern and employer needs. Interns build communication and problem-solving, as well as job-specific skills, through work rotations. These are unpaid internships. Worksites are assigned based on the intern's previous work experience, interest, preferences and assessments. Skills Instructors work with interns to aid in skill development with the goal of independence.

Program Overview

The goal for each student is long-term competitive, integrated employment within the community.

The Project SEARCH High School Transition Program is a school year long internship program that immerses students in a real work environment, provides employment and daily living related instruction and allows interns to work in three different departments at Mayo Clinic Health System throughout the year.

Project SEARCH was developed at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, which is still the administrative headquarters for the organization. Under the leadership of J. Erin Riehle and Susie Rutkowski, there are over 700 Project SEARCH sites worldwide.

Visit the Project SEARCH National website at:
www.projectsearch.us

Program Eligibility

Minimum Qualifications:

- Age 18 or older
- Completion of high school credits necessary for graduation, in the last year of high school services and accepting diploma at the end of the school year
- Must be eligible for Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Services
- Able to pass a background check
- Immunizations are current
- Desire and plan to work competitively in the community at conclusion of the program

Preferred Qualifications:

- Independent personal hygiene and grooming skills
- Independent daily living skills
- Appropriate behavior and social skills in the workplace
- Ability to take direction from supervisors and change behavior
- Ability to communicate effectively with or without accommodations
- Has access to reliable transportation each day to and from Mayo Clinic Health System
- Previous experience in a work environment (school, volunteer or paid work)
- Meets eligibility requirements for long term support; screening is provided by the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)
- Introductory Computer Skills

Application Process

Every Fall there is an Information Night for potential students, family and community members that want to learn more about the program, potential worksites, discuss program goals, ask questions and meet the Project SEARCH staff.

Interested students are encouraged to request an application packet from their district Special Education Director and discuss Project SEARCH at their IEP meetings.

Students are referred to the program through their school district and apply before or at the beginning of the calendar year prior to entering the program, usually in January for a September start date. Once the student has applied, they will participate in an interview and assessment day in early Spring.

This program is made possible by the following partners:

