



Project | SEARCH[®]

2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A program for transition students
in Berrien County!

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This toolkit is presented by the Berrien RESA Special Education Department's Transition Team in partnership with community agencies who promote and support student success.

REV DATE: FEB 2024



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KEY DATES/DEADLINES

| | |
|------------------|--|
| March 22 | Project SEARCH Applications due |
| April 12 | Skills Assessment/Interview Day |
| April 19 | Letters of Acceptance mailed to applicants |
| May 6 | Project SEARCH Intern Orientation Night |
| July | Project SEARCH “Career Camp” - TBD |
| August | IEP Meeting for Interns - TBD |
| August 26 | First day of 2024/2025 Internship |

KEY CONTACTS FOR ASSISTANCE

| | |
|---|--|
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WHAT IS PROJECT SEARCH?

The Project SEARCH Transition Program is a unique, business-led, one year school-to-work program that takes place entirely at the workplace. Total workplace immersion facilitates a combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and hands-on training through worksite rotations. Project SEARCH is a non-paid internship experience.

Where does the program take place?

The program offered in Berrien County is housed at Corewell Health Medical Center, St. Joseph.

Who is eligible to participate?

Students who are 18 years old or older, have an IEP and a desire to work are able to apply to participate in the program. Access to reliable transportation is essential to be successful in Project SEARCH. Our partners will help explore transportation options if needed.

What are the goals of the program?

The goal for each student participant is competitive employment. The program provides real-life work experience combined with training in employability and independent living skills to help youths with significant disabilities make successful transitions from school to productive adult life.

The Project SEARCH model involves an extensive period of training and career exploration, innovative adaptations, long-term skills training, and continuous feedback from teachers, skills trainers, job coaches and employers. As a result, at the completion of the training program, students with significant intellectual disabilities can be employed in nontraditional, complex and rewarding jobs.



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- The goal of Project SEARCH is to help student interns gain competitive employment in an integrated setting. Employment in an integrated setting (that is, working alongside coworkers with and without disabilities) is:
 - Year-round work (not seasonal employment)
 - 16 hours/week or more
 - Minimum wage or higher
- Project SEARCH is a business-led program. This means that students learn relevant, marketable skills while immersed in the business and those businesses are active partners, participating without subsidies.
- True collaboration among partner agencies is essential. This leads to seamless transition services and sustainability through braided funding streams. True collaboration requires a willingness among partner organizations to share resources and adapt policies and procedures. The following are active partners:
 - Businesses*
 - Education / Schools*
 - Vocational Rehabilitation*
 - Community Rehabilitation Providers*
 - Long-term Support Agencies*
 - Families*
 - Social Security Administration*
- The Program focus is on serving young adults with a variety of developmental disabilities (acquired before age 22 such as intellectual disability, visual impairment, hearing impairment, orthopedic impairment, autism, etc.).
- Program participants experience total immersion in the workplace. Student interns are on site at the business each school day for a minimum of six hours for an entire academic year.
- The partners provide consistent on-site staff including a special education teacher from the school district and job coaches (usually funded by Vocational Rehabilitation and a supported employment agency and/or the school).
- Project SEARCH graduates receive effective transition services for 1 year to retain employment.
- Each Project SEARCH program site has a licensing agreement signed with Project SEARCH Cincinnati through Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does it mean to be a Project SEARCH intern?

An intern is a student who has been accepted into the Project SEARCH Program, has a strong desire to work, has no behavioral/attendance concerns and is eager to gain employment through a work experience. Students in the program will be referred to as interns by sponsoring parties as well as coworkers during the program. They will be expected to participate in the Corewell Health's work culture and do their best to uphold Corewell Health's vision, mission and will abide by all policies/procedures.

If a student is interested in Project SEARCH, what should the student do?

Students should contact their high school special education teacher or district's special education director. They will provide you with application information.

Why is this considered as student's last year of school?

The goal of Project SEARCH is to provide interns with marketable and transferable skills that lead to employment. Interested students should anticipate earning employment opportunities and entering the workforce once they have completed their internship experience.

What school calendar schedule will student interns follow with Project SEARCH?

Interns participating in the program will follow the Berrien RESA school year calendar. This calendar can be found by visiting BerrienRESA.org.

What are the daily hours for Project SEARCH?

Interns are expected to work at their job placement site from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. each work day. These times do not include transportation.



FAQs CONTINUED

How do student interns get to Project SEARCH each day?

Interns are responsible for their own transportation either through personal or public transportation. Project SEARCH does not provide transportation.

Will participants still be considered a student at their current school/district?

The Project SEARCH program is a capstone experience for students. As such, Berrien RESA will become responsible for implementing the student's IEP as the operating district.

Are program participants required to work with certain agencies in order to comply with the program's structure?

Yes, interns are required to have open cases with Michigan Rehabilitative Services and understand that Berrien RESA will serve them as their operating district. Based on the intern's need, other partners may provide additional support.

If I have more questions regarding Project SEARCH, who should I contact?

The county coordinator of the Program is Robin Snyder, Berrien RESA's Supervisor of Ancillary Health Services. She can be reached at (269) 471-7725 ext. 3604 or robin.snyder@berrienresa.org.



APPLICATION/INTERVIEW PROCESS

Where can potential student interns find an application?

Applications can be found by visiting the Berrien RESA website at www.BerrienRESA.org/programs/project-search.

When do interested individuals submit applications?

Applications are due on Friday, March 22, 2024.

How do interested individuals turn in applications?

Applications must be submitted to the student's special education caseload teacher or mailed to:

Robin Snyder
711 St. Joseph Ave.
P.O. Box 364
Berrien Springs, MI 49103

What additional information and forms do students need to submit with their my applications?

- Completed Application Packet
- Shot/Immunization Record

- Copy of current Individual Education Program (IEP) including Transition Goals
- Current Evaluation Team Report
*Include Most Recent Math and Reading Scores/Grade Levels
- High School Transcript School
- Transcript from any other formal training
- Attendance Record
- Work Based Learning Experience Evaluation

Once the application has been submitted, what happens next?

Applicants will be notified by letter that they have been invited to the next step of the application process. The next step is a skills assessment evaluation as well as an interview. Based upon the student's performance during the skills assessment, the student will then learn if he or she has been accepted into the Program.



SKILLS ASSESSMENT DAY

Where does the Skills Assessment Day take place?

The Skills Assessment evaluations take place at Corewell Health Medical Center, St. Joseph. The specific room location will be provided in a letter that is mailed to the applicant.

What happens during the Skills Assessment Day?

Applicants rotate through various department modules which may include stocking, cleaning, nutritional services, preparing hospital rooms, identifying and sorting medical equipment/tools.

THERE IS NO NEED TO PRACTICE OR PREPARE FOR THIS SECTION OF THE ASSESSMENT.

The goal for this portion of the Skills Assessment is to learn how applicants would react in certain situations, if they would feel comfortable asking for help and be able to identify who to ask for assistance.

Additionally, applicants will participate in an interview where they will be asked questions by Project SEARCH and Corewell Health representatives. Questions will

relate to the applicant's work ethic, attendance, future goals, and their social skills.

What should applicants plan/prepare for in regard to the Skills Assessment day?

Applicants should treat this experience as they would a traditional job interview. They should wear business professional attire and come prepared to answer (and ask) questions. Portfolios are welcome.

Are parents part of this day?

Parents are welcome to wait in the lobby area during the applicant's interview.

How long does the day last?

Most assessments take two to three hours to complete. All applicants will have a scheduled appointment time.

After the Skills Assessment Day, what happens next?

Based on the applicant's performance during both the skills assessment and the interview, a letter of acceptance/denial will be mailed by Friday, April 19, 2024 to the applicant's home.



ACCEPTANCE INTO THE PROGRAM

What do applicants do once they are accepted into the Program?

After receiving an acceptance letter, applicants will be invited to a New Intern Orientation meeting at Corewell Health Medical Center, St. Joseph that will outline all the requirements (such as drug screening, tuberculosis testing, background check, etc.) and support meetings student interns must attend prior to your first day of work.

Do Program participants need to attend all the support meetings leading up to the first day as a Project SEARCH Intern?

Yes, it is a requirement to attend all support meetings prior to the start of Project SEARCH. It is also required for student interns to complete all required “new employee” mandates (drug screenings, background checks, etc.) as determined necessary by Corewell Health.

What happens at the New Intern Orientation meeting?

During this meeting Interns will be introduced to all the Project SEARCH

partners, take a tour of Corewell Health Medical Center, St. Joseph and walk through the requirements leading up to the first day of work at the hospital.

Why do students need an open case with Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) or the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons?

MRS and BSBP are Project SEARCH partners and to work with MRS or BSBP and receive their services, a case will need to be open. MRS or BSBP will be proactively supporting the student interns throughout their entire Project SEARCH experience.

Are student interns required to complete an Intake process with Riverwood?

Should an intern need to open a case with Riverwood, they would do so after they have started their intern year. An appointment will be made at a time that is convenient for the intern.



ACCEPTANCE CONTINUED

Will students work with Disability Network Southwest Michigan throughout this process?

Every intern will have the benefit of receiving an Independent Living Evaluation prior to starting the internship.

Why do student interns need to have a flu shot?

As a Project SEARCH participant, student interns must follow Corewell Health's rules and expectations for their employees.

Why do student interns need to take and pass a drug test?

As a Project SEARCH participant, student interns must follow Corewell Health's rules and expectations for their employees.

Why do student interns need to complete and pass a background check?

As a Project SEARCH participant, interns must follow Corewell Health's rules and expectations for their employees.

Why do student interns need to have a new IEP meeting

prior to starting Project SEARCH?

In order to be in compliance with Project SEARCH program guidelines, all student interns must complete a new IEP prior to the start of their internship experience.

Why do student interns need to attend Corewell Health's New Team Member Orientation meeting?

As a Project SEARCH participant, student interns must follow Corewell Health's rules and expectations for their employees.

What happens at Lakeland's New Team Member Orientation?

During the New Team Member Orientation, student interns will learn about Corewell Health's rules and expectations for all employees.

Once the Internship starts, students will receive a student handbook that will outline expectations and procedures relative to their conduct as a Project SEARCH participant. The handbook will discuss dress code, attendance expectations, lunch options, etc.



Check it out!

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The goal of Project SEARCH is to help student interns gain competitive employment in an integrated setting.

Employment in an integrated setting (that is, working alongside coworkers with and without disabilities) is:

- Year-round work (not seasonal employment)
- 16 hours/week or more
- Minimum wage or higher



“Berrien RESA’s program has not just exposed the interns to valuable work life skills, but has also enhanced the lives and job performance of those who have had the pleasure to work with them. Every accomplishment starts with a decision to try and I don’t know anyone who has tried harder than Dana to accomplish her duties in the ER. She comes to work with a positive attitude, is organized, efficient, and dependable. We consider her part of our ED team. When Dana stocks supplies, we know they will be there when the emergency hits our doors.”

-Kathy Effa, Emergency Room Supervisor



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A program for transition students
in Berrien County!

2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR **INTERN APPLICATION**

Name: _____

School: _____

Hosted by:



**Corewell
Health**[™]

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Purpose

The purpose of this application packet is to outline the skill set of the Project SEARCH Intern Candidate. This application enables the Selection Committee to properly assess each Intern Candidate's skills, abilities and background. A parent, Intern Candidate, counselor, school staff, or employer may be contacted by the Selection Committee to gather additional information. Our final goal is to select Intern Candidates who will be successful in a Project SEARCH program and reach the outcome of competitive employment.

Selection Process Guidelines

1. Submit the completed application by **Friday, March 22, 2024** to:

Robin Snyder
Supervisor of Ancillary Health Services, Berrien RESA

2. The Selection Committee will only accept fully completed applications. Any incomplete application will be disregarded and the Intern Candidate will not be accepted.
3. If accepted, the Selection Committee will match the Intern Candidate skill set and interests with the appropriate Project SEARCH Internship.
4. If accepted, an IEP will be developed with the IEP team for the 2024-2025 school year.
5. If accepted, Intern Candidate must be able to pass a criminal background check and drug screen.

***Please note:**

- The Selection Committee will include: Instructor, Job Coach, Representative from Berrien RESA, Michigan Rehabilitation Services Vocational Counselor, and Representatives from Riverwood and Michigan's Bureau Services for Blind Persons.
- This application packet is utilized for post-secondary school transition candidates.

Order of Selection

1. Oldest Intern Candidates (18 – 26 age range)
2. Intern Candidates who have finished their necessary years of high school
3. Intern Candidates who will benefit from participation in a variety of internships
4. Intern Candidates who are interested in using public or own mode of transportation to access Project SEARCH
5. Intern Candidates who desire to work competitively at the end of Project SEARCH

Required Documents

All of the documents listed below must be completed and submitted together for consideration.

- Completed Application Packet**
- Shot/Immunization Record or Copy**
- Current Individual Education Program (IEP) including Transition Goals**
- Current Evaluation Team Report**
 - *Include Most Recent Math and Reading Scores/Grade Levels
- High School Transcript**
- School Transcript from any other formal training**
- Attendance Record**
- Work Based Learning Experience Evaluation**

Return completed Packet to:

Robin Snyder
Supervisor of Ancillary/Health Services, Berrien RESA
P.O. Box 364
711 St. Joseph Ave
Berrien Springs, MI 49103
robin.snyder@berrienresa.org

***Please note:**

A completed background and criminal check will need to be completed by June 1 for accepted students.

List of Corewell Health Requirements

Immunizations: Documentation of vaccination, disease, or titer:

- Current TB test-not older than 1 year
- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Chicken Pox
- Hepatitis B
- ***Influenza – required for placement that will occur during flu season; October 1 – April 30***
- COVID-19

Other:

- 5 panel drug screen
- National criminal background check

To be completed upon acceptance into program of study requiring clinical time at facility.

Results not older than 6 months from clinical start date.

Key Dates & Deadlines

- 🌸 Applications due Friday, March 22, 2024
- 🌸 Intern Candidate Skills Assessment/Interview Friday, April 12, 2024.
- 🌸 Intern Selection Committee meets and letters are sent out to Candidates/families & schools by Friday, April 19, 2024
- 🌸 New Intern Orientation is Monday, May 6, 2024
- 🌸 Michigan Rehabilitation Services/Bureau Services for Blind Persons will open eligible cases in March – May 2024
- 🌸 Community Mental Health will open eligible cases in March-August 2024
- 🌸 Comprehensive Independent Living Evaluation completed May – July 2024
- 🌸 Student IEP meetings with affiliated school and team members at Berrien RESA Administration Center in August 2024
- 🌸 Anticipated internship begins Monday, August 26, 2024

Robin Snyder

**Supervisor of Ancillary/Health Services, Berrien RESA P.O.
Box 364
711 St. Joseph Ave
Berrien Springs, MI 49103
robin.snyder@berrienresa.org**

Project SEARCH Application for Berrien County at Corewell Health, St. Joseph

Please complete and return to your contact teacher.

PERSONAL DATA

Name: Last First Middle

Address: Street City Zip

Home Phone: Cell: Email:

District of Residence: School Currently Attending:

Date of Birth: Choose one (optional) Male Female

Student is their own legal guardian Yes No

Parent/Guardian Name: Parent/Guardian email:

Address: Street City Zip

Parent/Guardian Home Phone: Parent/Guardian Cell Phone:

PARENT/INTERN CANDIDATE INFORMATION:

1. Release: The student's educational/employment records concerning my son/daughter will be transferred from the home school to Berrien RESA.
2. Equal Opportunity: Project SEARCH placement will be made without regard to race, color, age, sex, national origin, cultural or economic background, housing circumstances is entitled to equal opportunity for educational development.

A two-week trial period will be required of all accepted enrollees. The parent/guardian and student agree to comply with this procedure.

Intern Signature X Date

Parent/Guardian Signature X Date

SCHOOL USE ONLY

Please attach transcript and most recent report card/IEP.

Total Credits to Date

Cumulative GPA

Does the student have the necessary credits for graduation?

Yes

No

Days Absent:

2023-2024

2022-2023

Comments about attendance:

COUNSELOR/SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF COMMENTS:

Counselor/Special Education Staff Signature X

Title

Date

FUTURE EMPLOYMENT PREFERENCES and BACKGROUND

What is your career of interest?

How do you want to be employed in the community upon the completion of Project SEARCH?

Full-time Part-time

Which shift would you prefer working after the completion of Project SEARCH?

1st Shift (7am – 3pm) 2nd Shift (3pm – 11 pm) 3rd Shift (11 pm – 7 am)

Would you be willing to work holidays and/or weekends?

Yes No

Do you plan to work during the school year, in addition to being in the Project SEARCH Program?

Yes No

If yes, where?

How many days/hours?

List jobs you do or have done in the school or in the community:

Employer #1:

Contact Number:

Supervisor's Name:

Paid

Unpaid

Job Duties:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Employer #2:

Contact Number:

Supervisor's Name:

Paid

Unpaid

Job Duties:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Employer #3:

Contact Number:

Supervisor's Name:

Paid

Unpaid

Job Duties:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Have you ever been fired from a job?

Yes

No

If yes, please explain:

Have you ever quit a job?

Yes

No

If yes, please explain:

SERVICE AGENCIES

Do you have a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor? (Michigan Rehabilitation Services or Michigan Bureau of Services for Blind People)

Yes Name Phone Number

No

Are you eligible for services from Community Mental Health and/or Substance Abuse Services?

Yes Supports Coordinator Phone Number

No

INDEPENDENT LIVING/BEHAVIORAL SUMMARY CHECKLIST

List medications, dosage, and time of day each medication is taken by the student.

| | | | | | |
|--------------|----------------------|--------|----------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Medication 1 | <input type="text"/> | Dosage | <input type="text"/> | Time of Day | <input type="text"/> |
| Medication 2 | <input type="text"/> | Dosage | <input type="text"/> | Time of Day | <input type="text"/> |
| Medication 3 | <input type="text"/> | Dosage | <input type="text"/> | Time of Day | <input type="text"/> |

Check all deficits or behavioral issues that may apply in which you would need support.

School staff may assist you in completing this section of the application.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mobility | <input type="checkbox"/> Substance abuse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Functional reading at workplace | <input type="checkbox"/> Mood |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reading comprehension | <input type="checkbox"/> Attention |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speech/language | <input type="checkbox"/> Hyperactivity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Handling money/transactions | <input type="checkbox"/> Violent behavior |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communicating/working with others | <input type="checkbox"/> Harming self or others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interpreting/responding appropriately to others | <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawal/isolation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding acceptable level of personal interaction | <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance | <input type="checkbox"/> Decision Making |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self-care/hygiene | <input type="checkbox"/> Adjusting to new situations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medicinal self-administration | <input type="checkbox"/> Theft |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self-direction | <input type="checkbox"/> Recall instruction on work task |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confused/disoriented | <input type="checkbox"/> Work tolerance (standing, stairs, lifting) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Distractible | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal needs on the job |

STUDENT RESPONSE QUESTION

Why do you want to participate in Project SEARCH? (Complete in your own words and/or person assisting will write the responses in the student's own words)

REFERENCES

List three references.

Family Reference

Name Relationship to Student
Phone Number Email Address

School Reference

Name Title
Phone Number Email Address

Community Agency/Other Reference

Name Title
Phone Number Email Address

ASSISTANCE

The person assisting the student to complete this application is:

Name Title
Organization
Phone Number Email Address
Signature X Date

PROJECT SEARCH INTERN CONTRACT

****The student will be asked to sign this upon acceptance into the program at the IEP meeting.***

Read the student contract below and sign and date.

I, , understand that if I am accepted into the Project SEARCH program and must abide by the following terms and conditions:

- I will complete at least three unpaid job rotations within the host business.
- I will attend the program every day from **8:30 am- 3:00 pm** (*subject to change*), Monday through Friday.
- I understand that the Project SEARCH program correlates with **Berrien RESA's** school calendar.
- I will dress appropriately and wear required attire.
- I will call my instructor and departmental supervisors when I am absent or tardy.
- I will make up any assignments missed due to excused absences.
- I understand that I am responsible for transportation to the host site.
- I will learn to use public transportation when available.
- I will follow all the rules established by the program and host business (Lakeland Health).
- I will attend monthly meetings with my rehabilitation counselor, parents, teachers, and business staff.
- I will be an active participant and communicate any issues at our monthly meetings.
- I will actively pursue employment.
- I understand that while completing my internship at Corewell it is expected that I will receive an influenza vaccination.

I have read the above terms and conditions and agree to accept my placement in the Project SEARCH program. I understand that I may be asked to leave Project SEARCH if I fail to follow the terms and conditions.

Intern Signature X Date

Parent/Guardian Signature X Date