

INTRODUCTION TO WESTSIDE YOUNG ADULT TRANSITION SERVICES

A parent's introduction to 18 to 21-year-old services.

Westside Transition Program

Westside Community Schools offers one of the most comprehensive Young Adult Transition Programs in the country, with a wide variety of vocational experience and training sites throughout the Omaha Metro area. Students in the program are exposed to a variety of instructional and exploratory activities, from independently preparing meals and refining self-help skills, to drafting a resume and preparing for a job interview. Unique to our program, an apartment is utilized as a training site for student acquisition and practice of functional daily living skills. Multiple recreation, leisure and volunteer opportunities are provided to students during the school day. Every component of the Westside Young Adult Transition Program helps to ensure that students are well-prepared for life post-secondary, once they earn their diploma from Westside High School.

Project SEARCH

Project SEARCH is a business-led program that is hosted by Children's Hospital & Medical Center. We collaborate with Vocational Rehabilitation, Assistive Technology Partnership, Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired and Division of Developmental Disabilities. Interns in the program are provided three 10-week unpaid internships around the hospital. This total immersion in the workplace allows interns to work on employability skills in real-time and allow for experiences that will enable them to achieve their goal of competitive employment after graduation. Project SEARCH participants need to meet specific criteria and complete an application and screening process before being accepted into the program.

INSIDE

- What can I expect from my student's IEP team?
- Transition Timeline
- What will special education services look like?
- How can I plan for my student's transition?



WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM MY STUDENT'S IEP TEAM?

High School to Transition/Project SEARCH Transition Meeting:

Before the end of your student's 12th grade year, you may be asked to attend a transition meeting.

→ Purpose of Meeting:

- Sharing basic information about your student's strengths, needs and success strategies
- Learning general information about Westside's Transition Program and/or Project SEARCH program at Children's Hospital & Medical Center
- Discussing possible services and supports based on your student's needs and IEP goals
- Providing an opportunity for you and the WHS team to ask questions and schedule future visits

This meeting will typically include staff from your student's current IEP team as well as staff from the Transition or Project SEARCH Program.

At any time, parents are encouraged to ask questions or request information from your student's IEP manager or Special Education Coordinator about the upcoming transition options.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Meeting:

IEP meetings for your student will continue to occur on an annual basis. In preparation for the Westside Transition Program or Project SEARCH, your student's IEP may need to be adjusted. These adjustments can be made during a high school transition meeting, during a separate IEP meeting, and/or via an IEP addendum (no meeting required).

→ Possible Adjustments:

- Program attending
- IEP manager
- Duration of school day
- Service providers
- Service times
- Transportation

REMEMBER: You have the right to call an IEP meeting at any time. Your student's team may choose to hold an IEP meeting prior to the start of Transition/Project SEARCH, shortly after the school year begins, or in accordance with the IEP due date.

TRANSITION TIMELINE

FALL of 12th-Gr. Year

- 12th-grade IEP Managers talk with parents about possible options for Transition services within the Westside Transition Program or Project SEARCH
- Student and parent visits may be scheduled for either one or both programs, based on the goals of each student

SPRING of 12th-Gr. Year

- March - Project SEARCH applications are due
- April - Skills Day for Project SEARCH is held and Interns notified of acceptance
- May - Staff observe incoming students in current setting and collaborate with current team
- May - IEP meetings and/or transition meetings are held as needed

WINTER of 12th-Gr. Year

- District begins plans for next year's projections (i.e., caseload sizes, staffing, etc.)
- February - Parent Information Night for Project SEARCH is held to provide more information on the application process

SUMMER After 12th-Gr. Year

- Project SEARCH Orientation is held; requirements for participating in Project SEARCH are fulfilled by families/staff at Project SEARCH
- Transition Program Open House held
- Transition-related questions should be directed to Coordinator or Special Services Director

FALL of Transition/Project SEARCH Year

- Transition and Project SEARCH starts along with the Westside School Calendar

WHAT WILL SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES LOOK LIKE?

The Westside Transition Program School Day

- The Westside Transition Program typically operates Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m to 2:30 p.m. Before and After school transportation is provided only if a student qualifies for specialized transportation. The program begins their day at the Pipal Park Community Center on the North East Corner of Westgate Elementary School. During program hours, students will be transported to and from job sites by the district. Students' days are designed to provide opportunities to address educational needs and learn skills to promote functional academic, daily living, pre-vocational, and social/recreational skill growth. All students' programs are designed with students' IEP goals at the core and activities and the learning environment will differ day to day. The Westside Transition Program aims to provide experiences to help students determine potential careers as well as opportunities to practice the daily living skills they will need for life.

RELATED SUPPORTS & SERVICES:

- As defined by the IEP, students may receive physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech/language therapy, vision &/or hearing services, medical support, assistive technology, social skills instruction, behavioral intervention, etc. These supports and services may be provided in a small group setting, or one-on-one with a provider, during the school day. Additionally, Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation will visit and meet with students throughout the year to develop relationships to better assist in adult services.

The Project SEARCH Program School Day

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL & MEDICAL CENTER:

- Interns accepted into the Project SEARCH program at Children's Hospital and Medical Center will work Monday - Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Interns will work from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in an internship working alongside Hospital staff. From 1:30 p.m to 2:30 p.m., Project SEARCH interns will participate in the Project SEARCH curriculum, which is focused on teaching the skills needed to obtain competitive employment.

RELATED SUPPORTS & SERVICES:

- As defined by the IEP, students may continue to receive physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech/language therapy, vision &/or hearing services, medical support, assistive technology, etc. These supports and services may be provided while the intern is at Project SEARCH during times that do not interfere with their internship experience.

Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success.

- Henry Ford

HOW CAN I PLAN FOR MY STUDENT'S TRANSITION?

Transition Meeting Planning

QUESTIONS YOU MAY WANT TO ASK:

- What will my student's day look like?
- What kind of communication can I expect?
- What types of support can I provide at home for the transition?
- Are the goals for my student achievable with the current supports?
- What are the differences and similarities between Project SEARCH and the Transition Program?

QUESTIONS YOU CAN EXPECT TO BE ASKED:

- What are your student's strengths?
- What are your greatest concerns?
- Are there any tasks or jobs that your student likes to complete at home?
- What types of employment do you see for your student in the future?
- How will my student get to and from either Project SEARCH or Transition?

Easing the Transition

TRANSITION:

- **Transition Open House** - Summer 2021 (Date TBD) - Transition parents and students are welcome to visit the program and ask questions in person; a great opportunity to get to know staff, students, and families of our Transition Program.

PROJECT SEARCH:

- **Orientation** - Summer 2021 (Date TBD) - Interns will receive their Project SEARCH Handbook. Uniforms and other requirements for participation in Project SEARCH will also be completed at this time.

Future Planning for Your Student

INVOLVEMENT WITH AGENCIES:

- Have you worked with Vocational Rehabilitation?
- Have you signed up for Supplemental Security Income?
- Have you talked with the Division for Developmental Disabilities?
- Have you looked into Medicaid for your student?
- Have you obtained a state ID for your student?
- If guardianship is appropriate for your student, have you started the process of obtaining guardianship?

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW WILL MY STUDENT'S ACCOMMODATIONS BE PROVIDED AT TRANSITION/PROJECT SEARCH?

- Accommodations will be provided to your student as outlined in their IEP. These accommodations may be provided in multiple environments across the day as necessary to meet your student's needs.

HOW WILL MY STUDENT GET TO AND FROM PROJECT SEARCH OR TRANSITION?

- Typically, transportation is the responsibility of the family. Some students qualify for specialized transportation. Specialized transportation is a yearly IEP team decision. If your student currently receives specialized transportation to and from school, they may be eligible to continue.

HOW ARE JOB SITES OR INTERNSHIPS CHOSEN AT TRANSITION AND PROJECT SEARCH?

- The IEP team will work together to assign job sites and/or internships according to your student's skills, interests and needs.

HOW ARE JOB SITES OR INTERNSHIPS SUPERVISED IN TRANSITION AND PROJECT SEARCH?

- Transition: Staff accompany small groups of students in the community at every job site.
- Project SEARCH: One teacher and two skills trainers support all students in their internships. Mentors are assigned to students within their specific departments at the hospital.

HOW DOES TECHNOLOGY WORK AT TRANSITION/PROJECT SEARCH?

- Every student is issued their own device at the beginning of the school year.
 - Typically, devices are kept on-site at Transition and Project SEARCH for use during class time.



HAVE OTHER QUESTIONS?

As questions arise this year, **please don't hesitate to reach out** to your child's current IEP manager and/or Jennifer Brockman, Coordinator of High School Special Services.

... DISTRICT CONTACTS ...

Jenny Brockman

Coordinator of High School Special Services

402-390-2272

brockman.jennifer@westside66.net

Kami Jessop

Director of Special Services

402-390-2110

jessop.kami@westside66.net

NOTES

NOTES