



Penn State Hershey Medical Center – Project SEARCH 2025-2026 Program Profile

Description

The Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU) is partnered with The Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center and the Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) to operate the Penn State Hershey Project SEARCH Program site at the Milton S. Hershey Medical Center.

The Penn State Hershey Medical Center Project SEARCH Program features a unique, business-led, school-to-work program that takes place entirely at the workplace, Hershey Medical Center. Total workplace immersion facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and relevant job-skills training through strategically designed internships. The goal for each student participant is competitive employment.

Placement Criteria

- Project SEARCH serves students with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are at least 18 years of age, have an IEP, are in their last year of high school, and have been found to be OVR eligible. The most important criterion for acceptance into Project SEARCH is a desire to achieve competitive employment.
- Participation is limited to 12 students per year. In order to be considered for the program, students must be referred by their home district, meet all eligibility requirements, submit an application and participate in an interview and skills assessment. Final selection of participants will be made by the Student Selection Team, a team composed of representatives from each of the partners, The Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, CAIU and OVR.

Exit Criteria

- This is a program for students who are in their final year of school. All successful participants will graduate upon completion with a goal of having obtained competitive employment.

Location

Penn State Hershey Medical Center

Staffing

1 Teacher: 8-12 students: 1 Skills Trainer: 4 students

Services included in tuition fee	IEP Services not included in tuition fee*
- Classroom instruction to work on employability and functional skills - Classroom activities designed around the following focus areas: Team Building, Getting Around your Workplace, Workplace Safety, Technology, Social Skills, Communication, Presentation Skills, Interviewing Skills, Money Management, Health and Wellness, Job Search Skills and Keeping a Job - Three targeted internships at Penn State Hershey Medical Center to acquire competitive, marketable and transferable skills to enable students to apply for a related position - Progress monitoring to assess progress toward IEP goals - Monthly progress meetings including OVR counselors and MH/ID supports coordinators - Technology hardware and software with associated technical support - Technical support from Educational Coaches	- Occupational Therapy services including direct service, SSP and IEP maintenance - Social Work Services including direct service, SSP and IEP maintenance - Physical Therapy including direct service, SSP and IEP maintenance - Speech and language services, including direct service, SSP and IEP maintenance - Personal Care Assistant (PCA) for behavior, self-care, or inclusion support - Psychiatric consultation and assessment - Unique, individualized assistive technology needs* - Blind & Visually Impaired support - Deaf & Hard of Hearing support - Extended School Year (ESY) services - Special Ed Coaching

*Additional fee assessed