PROJECT®
LIFE

USD 261
HAYSVILLE
SCHOOLS

HANDBOOK

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Your Future, Your Dream, Your Team

Each individual participating in the Project Life program is unique. You are here to make a better future for yourself. It is very important that you "self-advocate" or talk with us about what you want so that we can better assist you in your journey to adulthood and employment.
Self-advocacy means speaking up for yourself. It requires knowledge of your personal strengths, needs and rights as a citizen. If you need assistance with self-advocacy, our staff can assist you.

It is important to have clear and consistent communication in order to help reach your future goals. We want to work on building a team to help you.

Vision Statement

The dignity and independence of people with disabilities is at the core of the Project Life program and its implementation. Our program model follows the Project Life curriculum and is rooted in the understanding that the talents and interests of people with disabilities are as varied and individual as they are among any group. We believe that they have the right and capacity to pursue vocational opportunities that will promote and enhance their economic independence and participation as citizens of the community.

Program Description

Project Life is a combined education and work experience program in collaboration with Haysville School District and area business partners. It is designed for students with disabilities who have completed their high school academic requirements, but demonstrate a need to continue their education in a transition to work program, based on their IEP team's recommendation.
Most student interns participating in Project Life are eligible for services from Sedgwick County Development Disabilities Organization. If students need assistance connecting with these service agencies, the Project Life staff can assist them.

The Project Life program is designed to be a transition to adulthood learning continuum. The goal is to prepare student interns with disabilities for integrated, community employment and increased overall independence. The progression through the program is based on each individual student's progress. The program day consists of life skill focused classroom instruction in combination with time spent in authentic community work based learning environments. The program follows the Haysville Public School District calendar. Our school hours are 7:50 AM – 3:05 PM.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION YOU SHOULD KNOW

The Project Life program is a collaborative effort with community businesses that partner to provide opportunities for student interns to participate in job skill training experiences.

The student interns will typically participate in diverse learning opportunities during the course of

the Project Life school year. Students will rotate to jobs as needed to work towards transition goals. Differing job training locations, business site supervisory personnel, and Skills Trainers help to expand the vocational skills of the students. Skills Trainers will monitor and support the student interns in the work experience/job training assignments.

At any point in time, students may accept their diploma and exit school services. Continuation in the program will be based on demonstrated need.

Remember: The goal of the Project Life program is to prepare student interns with disabilities for future employment. Student interns who have demonstrated employability skills through participation in the Project Life program are expected to progress to the next step of transition programming or community employment.

If a student intern is failing to make adequate progress as evidenced via IEP progress reports, curriculum assessments, job training reports, and/or documented behavioral concerns there will be ample opportunity to address the concerns through regular correspondences between parents and instructors, as well as during the fall and spring planning meetings. Additional meetings may also take place at the request of the instructor, parent, or student intern. If the IEP team determines that the structure of the program is not an appropriate learning environment/ placement for the student intern, they will make all efforts to assist the student with a smooth transition from the program while working to identify services/programming that will better meet their needs.

Transportation

Transportation will be provided by the school district, if more than 2.5 miles, to the Project Life program location: Campus High School, 2100 W 55th St S, Wichita, KS 67217

Daily Schedule

The daily schedule depends on various factors such as transportation, job training site times, individual student needs, and opportunities to explore interests and support systems. Typically the majority of job training takes place Monday through Thursday, with Friday having a flexible schedule for activities, community outings, and volunteering.

Lunch

At the Project Life program, student interns will not have access to a cafeteria for lunch. Student interns are expected to bring their own lunch. There is a break area for the preparation of meal items as well as a refrigerator and freezer for food storage. Student interns are provided a thirty minute lunch period during which they will prepare, eat and clean-up their meal. Students are encouraged to consider the nutritional value of the items they bring for lunch as well as the time that it will take to prepare those items.

Attendance Policy

Student interns are expected to attend Project Life **every day**. When an intern is unable to attend Project Life, he or she must contact the instructor directly. This can be done by calling the instructor. Texting is not an acceptable method unless permission for this type of correspondence has been given. If the instructor is not available, the intern will need to leave a message with his/her name and the reason for the absence. Attendance is key for success in the Project Life program and also for employment.

If the intern will be late, leaving early, or will not be able to attend, they need to notify staff in advance by calling 316-554-2236 and leave a message with the Project Life instructor.

If the intern is aware of an upcoming absence, the intern should discuss this with the instructor. This can be used for scheduled doctor appointments, agency meetings, interviews, etc.

Important Note:

Attendance is important for maintaining employment. Excessive absences will be addressed with the intern. After two unexcused absences or no call or no shows, the instructor will have a conversation with the intern and their parent/guardian.

Inclement Weather

Student interns are to follow the closings/delay determinations from the Haysville School District.

Contact Information

Staff can be contacted by phone between the hours of 7:20 a.m. - 3:20 p.m.

Samantha Sexton
Project Life Instructor

2100 W 55th St S
Wichita, Kansas 67217
(316) 554-2236 ext. 1507
Email: ssexton@usd261.com

Program Orientation / Open House

Orientation/open house is a **required event.** This event is designed to ensure each intern and their family has been presented with an overview of the program and its requirements. This is also a time for interns and families to have questions answered. Interns are responsible for their own transportation to and from this evening event. Your program instructor will provide you with the date and times for this event.

Progress Reports

IEP progress reports will be sent home to parents/guardians at the end of each nine weeks.

Planning Meetings

Each student intern will have at least two scheduled planning meetings throughout the year, in addition to their annual IEP meeting. Interns are welcome to invite anyone they wish to attend these meetings. The first planning meeting will be held in the fall and the second in the spring. Additional planning meetings can be scheduled as needed to meet the individual needs of the interns.

Job Training

Each student intern will typically participate in a variety of job training experiences. At the start of the school year, each student intern will be evaluated and placed in the most appropriate job training location available. Student interns will be evaluated regularly by both the Project Life instructor and assigned Skills Trainer.

Note: Job training business partners may refuse access to any student who does not meet business site standards and policies for fitness, duty, health, safety, dress, appearance, proper identification, or ethical behavior. If this were to occur, the IEP team may reconvene to discuss how to move forward towards goals.

Skills Trainers

A Skills Trainer is an employment training professional who provides job-site training support, assessments and on-site fading supervision for individuals with disabilities who may have difficulty securing and maintaining competitive employment independently. At Project Life, a Skills Trainer assists student interns by providing specialized training and job related support services sometimes referred to as reasonable accommodations in the world of work. They also record daily notes and provide detailed weekly reports on student progress to the instructor. A Skills Trainer provides these services until the student intern can perform the tasks independently. This determination depends on the student's ability to follow the department rules and tasks of the job training environment in a safe and independent manner. This time can vary. It is very individualized.

Dress Code

Student interns are required to wear a uniform shirt and jeans or slacks to job sites daily. Clothes required for the job sites will be kept at the school and interns will change as needed. Interns will utilize on site laundry facilities to ensure clothes are clean and ready to go each day. Students are responsible for purchasing their uniform shirts from the Project LIFE store through Colt Branded

Interns are required to purchase at least 1 shirt - other items are optional.
(Please notify the program staff if you need assistance purchasing the uniform).

Some job sites require different dress codes. Students are welcome to wear clothes of choice to the school building, but are required to keep a pair of jeans or slacks at school to change as necessary.

Footwear must protect the heel and toes. Tennis shoes or casual dress shoes are the only suitable options. Sandals, flip-flops or croc shoes are not acceptable. If specific footwear is needed, the instructor will assist you in where to purchase them. Interns are welcome to keep required footwear at the school.

Student interns must wear their program issued name badge during program hours. During the colder months, students may wear a clean, neutral long-sleeved shirt under their uniform shirts. Sweatshirts will not be worn over uniform at the job sites.

Hygiene

An employment standard of hygiene must be maintained at all times. To achieve this level of hygiene, students should shower daily to eliminate body odor and keep hair clean. Student interns also need to maintain a clean, shaven face, clipped and clean fingernails, clean clothes and a business appropriate hair style.

Storage of Personal Belongings

Student interns at Project Life will be provided space for their personal belongings. They are responsible for all materials they bring to the program. Project Life and business partners are not responsible for any items lost or taken from the Project Life program classroom, work site or buses.

Electronic Devices

Student intern use of personal electronic devices will follow state and district policy.

Community-Based Trips

Student interns will participate in community-based outings throughout the year. These trips include restaurants, shopping trips and other activities. Prior to these trips, students will discuss appropriate behavior, etiquette required at the locations and a budget to maintain (when necessary). Some experiences may include restaurants such as delivery/ordering in, fast food, buffet style, casual dining, and possibly more formal dining opportunities. The activities will be selected in advance along with the cost of the outing. An email will be sent detailing the trip and the estimated amount needed for the activity.

A student intern may always bring more money than required. A field trip permission slip will be signed at the beginning of the school year for all community outings.

Newsletters

Project Life is a program that requires participation from all parties involved with the enrolled student intern. In order to assist parents, guardians, and associate school districts in staying up to date on current events within the program, a newsletter will be sent home and/or emailed periodically. It is important that students and families review this newsletter when it is sent home. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform all parties involved of upcoming events, instructional topics, and other important information.

Curriculum

Program Course of Study Units
Following the Project Life Curriculum
Unit 1: Safety Skills
Unit 2: Self Determination
Unit 3: Independence
Unit 4: Social and Communication Skills
Unit 5: Financial Skills
Unit 6: Technology Skills
Unit 7: Physical and Social Well Being
Unit 8: Micro-enterprise fundamentals

Responsibilities of Program Collaborators

The Project Life program is designed to help each student intern and their families work in partnership with their collaborators.

Student Intern Responsibilities:

- Understand there will be ongoing assessments to ensure the program is an appropriate placement setting.
- Agree to seek the next transitional step at the completion of Project Life.
- Maintain appropriate attendance in alignment with program attendance policy.
- Adhere to the standards of dress and appearance according to the program and work site standards.
- Conduct self appropriately in the classroom and on the work assignments, according to the standards established by the work site and program policy, including safety regulations.
- Learn and perform duties and tasks identified in the job descriptions for each assigned work site.
- Actively participate in periodic planning meetings.
- Actively participate in all classroom / community activities.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

- Support their son/daughter's interest and desire to pursue their next transitional step in the community after Project Life.
- Assist their son/ daughter in understanding the requirements of Project Life.
- Participate in the Project Life orientation and planning meetings with their son/daughter.

Project Life Responsibilities:

- Manage and operate Project Life in cooperation with its collaborators.
- Develop the Project Life program description and maintain on-going communication with partner agencies.
- Provide supervisory support for the program.
- Coordinate communication with work site/business, associate school district personnel, participants and their families regarding Project Life and any issues or concerns.

Business Sites Responsibilities:

- Define workplace expectations, processes and rules.
- Identify potential work assignments and assist in developing and modifying those assignments.
- Provide job descriptions for work assignments if available.

Possible Discharge from Program

Student interns are required to participate in the program consistent with the policies and procedures of the classroom and job training environment, the Project Life Handbook and, in accordance with training and direction given to them by the Project Life Instructor, Skills Training staff and the business site personnel who supervise them in their work assignments.

- Communication with student interns, their families, and the IEP team will take place regarding any emerging concerns the student is presenting at the Project Life program and strategies will be implemented to correct the situation.

- If improvement is not made, an IEP meeting will be arranged with the student/intern, parents, and IEP team to discuss resources/supports available from the district or other agencies that may be implemented to address the concern(s).

- If the supports and interventions are not successful in addressing the concern(s), the IEP team will meet again to determine whether the student intern is in the appropriate learning environment.

- Serious infractions that violate the rules of the business site or unlawful activity may result in suspension or discharge from the Project Life program.

Acknowledgment of Receipt of Project Life Handbook

After reviewing this handbook together with your parents, please sign and return this form to your program instructor.

The Project Life Handbook contains important information about the program, and I understand that I should consult the program instructor regarding any questions not answered in the handbook.

My parents and I understand by attending Project Life that I am agreeing to abide by the rules of the program and that I will fully participate to the best of my ability.

In addition, I agree that I will give my best effort every day so that I can gain skills needed to reach my goal of future employment in my community.

I have received a copy of the Project LifeHandbook and reviewed it carefully.

Student Intern Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Instructor Signature: _____ **Date:** _____