



# Special Education Transition Programs

## Project SEARCH:

### Howard County

A collaborative training program designed to employ students with disabilities in non-traditional, complex, and rewarding jobs.

#### Overview

Project SEARCH: Howard County is a one-year Transition Program designed for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities that are in their last year of high school. The program targets individuals whose main goal is employment, and who will benefit from full-time career exploration in a business setting.

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

This program is a collaborative effort of the Howard County Public School System, Howard County Government, Arc of Howard County, and the Division of Rehabilitation Services, MSDE.

#### Highlights:

- 30-week program (follows HCPSS calendar)
- Three 10-week internships in Howard County Government departments
- Interns are volunteers
- On-the-job training provided by coaches/instructor
- Workplace behavior training
- Ongoing monitoring of intern performance

The cornerstone of this one-year program is total immersion in the Howard County local government offices. Participants are onsite at the business each school day for a minimum of six hours for an entire academic year, 10 months.

#### Student Eligibility:

- Must be HCPSS student
- In last year of public school eligibility
- DDA and DORS eligible
- Ability to work independently
- Strong desire to work!

## Community Connection

A community inclusive transition program located on the Howard Community College campus, designed for students with disabilities who are in their final years of public school education.

#### Overview

Community Connection eases the transition to independent adult life for post-high school students with mild to moderate disabilities.

Located on the Howard Community College campus, the program helps students develop the skills essential for success in work, social, and community environments:

- Finding employment
- Workplace skills
- Financial literacy (money management, budgeting, and shopping)
- Appropriate behavior in work and social settings
- Navigating independently
- Self-advocacy
- Recreation and leisure

Students sharpen these skills while working and functioning in the community, with guidance and support from Community Connections staff.

#### Student Eligibility:

- Able to function independently with minimal supervision
- Demonstrates satisfactory attendance and behavior
- Student has completed, at least, four years in high school
- Seeking a Maryland High School Certificate of Completion (rather than diploma)
- Individual Education Program goals and transition plans are vocationally based
- Referral to the Community Connection Program is based on an IEP Team recommendation.

**For more information on any transition program, please call 410-313-5640.**



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## Work Study

**A customized employment program that is directly related to the student's interests and transition goals on the Individual Education Program (IEP)**

The HCPSS Work Study Program is a structured, supervised work experience in a business or other community organization. A teacher works closely with the student and the employer to ensure satisfactory job performance.

### Work Study:

- Allows opportunities for students who demonstrate ability to work independently
- Provides a level of worksite support as determined by the IEP team
- Designed for students 16 years of age and older who are seeking either a Certificate of Completion or diploma
- Allows for paid or unpaid training opportunities
- Provides bus transportation by the school system

### Goals of Work Study:

- Career Exploration.
- Development of work readiness skills.

### Roles of the Transition Specialist:

- Coordinates job development, placement, coaching and retention activities
- Assists with development of the student's portfolio or resume

## Start on Success Program

**An employment training program for students with disabilities at Howard County General Hospital or Howard Community College (HCC)**

### Overview

Start on Success (SOS) is an employment training program geared toward transitional youth with disabilities in the Howard County Public School System. It consists of a 16-week, paid internship at Howard County General Hospital or HCC. Students are placed in work departments based on their employment interests and skills.

## Career and Community Exploration (CCE)

**A community-based work and career exploration program for students who may require a higher degree of support or supervision, that enables them to sample a variety of opportunities**

### Overview

Career and Community Exploration experiences enable students who may require a higher degree of support or supervision, to experience a community-based vocational program while seeking a certificate of completion. CCE involves group work sites supervised by special education personnel that provide a transition step from school to independent work experiences.

In addition to gaining specific skills, CCE students learn work behaviors and attitudes, including:

- Following directions from a variety of supervisors
- Completing the job
- Increasing independent work time while decreasing the amount of supervision needed
- Taking pride in one's own work
- Seeking assistance when needed
- Using effective, socially-appropriate communication skills

The intent of the program is to give students an opportunity to sample a variety of experiences, demonstrate their ability to use learned skills in different settings, and ultimately, to use these skills in an independent work experience.

### Who is eligible?

- High school students in the Life Skills Programs
- Students seeking a certificate of completion

### What do students gain?

- Attitude and skills necessary to work
- Independent work skills
- Social interaction skills
- Exploration of a variety of work sites

### What is the enrollment process?

- Referral from a CCE Liaison
- IEP Team recommendation

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