



IPS Project SEARCH at Community Hospital East

September 2019



Program Goals

Project SEARCH is one of two transition programs for IPS students ages 18-21 who graduate with a Certificate of Completion. It is a work immersion program within the business of Community Hospital East. IPS' Project SEARCH began in February 2008 as the first Project SEARCH Program in the state of Indiana. Each student works five days/week for ten weeks as an unpaid intern in a specified department of the hospital with support personalized to their needs by a teacher and/or employment consultant. Interns work three ten-week rotations in different hospital departments over the course of one school year. Interns are taught to ride the IndyGO bus as their means of daily transportation to and from Project SEARCH and future community employment settings. The goal of Project SEARCH is paid employment.

Staffing Structure

Project SEARCH is a collaborative one-year program in partnership with Easter Seals Crossroads, Community Hospital East, and Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services. The program has the capacity of 16 student interns and is staffed by one IPS teacher and one Easter Seals Crossroads Employment Consultant. All Project SEARCH interns are students with IEPs ages 18-21 who:

- Have a cognitive disability,
- Are graduating with a Certificate of Completion,
- Are enrolled in IPS or MSD Warren Township,
- Have been determined to be eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services, and
- Have chosen Easter Seals Crossroads as their employment provider via VR services.

Application and Enrollment Process

Project SEARCH is an option for students to pursue when their post-secondary goal is paid employment and they are willing to work as an unpaid intern in a work immersion program as means of gaining and honing skills to achieve that goal.

Project SEARCH application packets are due on a specified date in November or December every year. Students in their final year of high school working toward a Certificate of Completion must work closely with their parents, teacher, and Employment Training Specialist/Job Coach to complete their application and attachment packet. Prior to submitting an application, the student and parent **must** visit and tour Project SEARCH at Community Hospital East via an appointment with the Project SEARCH teacher and employment consultant. Attending the annual Project SEARCH Open House is also highly recommended for any applicant, parent, and their high school teacher.

Following the submission of the application packet, Project SEARCH staff work with the applicant and their team to schedule meetings and appointments with Vocational Rehabilitation for the purpose of determining eligibility and enrolling in VR services, a key requirement for acceptance into the program.

Application packets are reviewed by an admission team, and applicants are notified of acceptance prior to the end of the school year. Services begin during the summer with travel safety/IndyGo bus instruction and practice, hospital-required screenings, and school enrollment for those not already enrolled in IPS or Warren Township.