

Mobile County Public Schools

Division of Special Programs

1 Magnum Pass, Mobile, AL 36618, 251-221-4218



Project SEARCH

High School Transition Program

An internship program designed to transition young adults into competitive employment through a partnership with the following:

- Mobile County Public Schools
- PCH Resorts & Hotels
- Alabama Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Volunteers of America Southeast
- Alabama Department of Mental Health
- Alabama Council of Developmental Disabilities
- Alabama State Department of Education

Program Overview

The Project SEARCH High School Transition Program is a unique one-year school-to-work program that takes place at the business. Interns participate in employment-related instruction and are assigned internships within either Renaissance Riverview Mobile or Battle House Spa & Resort.

The program provides real-life work experience combined with training in employability and independent living skills. Project SEARCH helps young adults with disabilities make successful transitions from school to productive adult life. The goal for each intern is competitive employment.

The Transition Program is for interns who are:

- In their last year of high school
- Interested in training within a business setting
- Working to achieve competitive employment

Program Eligibility

The following guidelines for eligibility are required for candidates:

- **Desire to become competitively employed and develop a strong work ethic.**
- Ability to work independently with minimal prompting and/or supervision.
- Employer/community acceptable social skills.
- Basic communication skills (verbal or supported technology).
- Ability to take direction and basic problem solving.
- Meets personal appearance and hygiene standards.
- Minimum of 18 years of age on first day of program.
- Ability to use restroom and cafeteria facilities independently.
- Ability to access and willingness to learn to use independent transportation options.
- Desire to train in a business setting, through a NON-paid Internship.
- Currently eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- **Student must willing to forgo participation in activities on regular school campus during the day (except graduation).**

Application Process

Students are referred to the program through their school transition teachers. Students and families complete and submit the application the school by a predetermined deadline in December. Space is limited for students applying and the selection is carried out by members of the Project SEARCH team. The committee reviews the application packets and schedules interviews for potential candidates. Parents attend the interviews, along with the student, and have an opportunity to ask questions.

All interested students are encouraged to request a Project SEARCH Application Packet from their case manager, transition teacher, or contact Lynn Moss at 251-221-4219 or wymoss@mcps.com.

Project SEARCH Curriculum

Throughout the school year, interns participate in a functional academic curriculum that stresses employability and independent living skills. The Project SEARCH training room time is designed around seven major focus areas:

1. Working responsibly
2. Communicating effectively with or without accommodations
3. Solving problems and developing critical thinking skills
4. Planning and managing employment
5. Applying technology
6. Developing self-advocacy skills
7. Demonstrating independent community travel skills

The curriculum is flexible and allows the instructor to design lessons around the core topics and adjust the curriculum based on specific intern and employer needs.

Work Rotations

Interns build communication and problem solving skills, as well as job specific skills, through work rotations. These are unpaid internships. Rotations are approximately 10 weeks long, usually totaling three rotations per school year. Rotation sites are assigned based on the intern's previous experiences while in high school, interests, preferences, and assessments. The Project SEARCH Instructor, Job Coaches, Mentors, and other department staff collaborate to provide support for the intern. **The goal is to have supports fade out as an intern gains independence. Thus leading to almost total independence when obtaining a job within the community.**

If you have any questions please contact Lynn Moss at wymoss@mcps.com or 251-221-4219

