

Winchester High School School to Work Program



Presented By:

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Winchester High School

School To Work Program

~Our Mission~

To prepare students with disabilities for success after high school, through school based internships, vocational experiences at local businesses, daily living skills training and community involvement.

The Program...

The School To Work program was developed by the Winchester High School Office of Special Education in conjunction with the Winchester Public Schools Department to provide vocational experiences to students with disabilities.

The goal of the School To Work Program is to provide students with the opportunity to have realistic vocational experiences designed to help each student gain soft skills needed for employment, an understanding of job related tasks, and training in a variety of industries.

Students involved in the School To Work program receive specialized instruction focused on academics coupled with life skills and vocational training to better prepare them for life after high school.

Each student engaged in the program starts with an on-campus internship at Winchester High School. This placement is designed to help prepare them for a position in the community.

Throughout the process students learn about workplace etiquette and ethics, expected professional behavior, and dress. Students also practice filling out job applications, develop their resumes, participate in informational interviews and mock job interviews. This highly organized process allows for parents, teachers, and other support professionals to assist students as they prepare for post-secondary life.

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On-Campus Internships...

The Transition Specialist works with the student and their Special Education IEP Team to match each student with a position on-campus.

As part of their On-Campus Internships, students are required to fill out a time sheet each day they work to reinforce workplace accountability and responsibility. Some students receive support from Job Coaching staff who may guide them on how to complete tasks and work with the Transition Specialist to review their progress as often as needed.

This monitoring process allows for the student to receive feedback and refine their vocational skills as they prepare for life after high school.

On-Campus Placements have included:

- **The Media Center and CTC (Library)**
- **Office of Special Education**
- **Cafeteria**
- **Main Office**
- **Custodial Services**
- **Transition Office**
- **Athletic Department**

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Off-Campus Internships...

Once a student has successfully met their goals in their On-Campus Internship, the Transition Specialist matches them with a local business for an Off-Campus Internship. This placement builds upon the students existing vocational skills and matches their interests for post-secondary employment.

Each student is required to meet with the potential employer prior to starting their position. Once a match is made, the student, accompanied by a Job Coach as needed, will travel to the place of employment for a specified amount of time each week. To get them started, specific job tasks will be assigned to the student and the Job Coach will monitor their progress to ensure the student has been properly trained and prepared for their new position.

With some students, the Job Coach will step back and students will come to work alone and prepared to work after a specified amount of time. With other students the Job Coach will remain at the job site throughout the off-campus internship period. The Job Coach will complete a Work Based Learning Plan to assess progress. These forms will help the Transition Specialist gauge the students strengths and weaknesses and help to determine if the placement is a good fit. Any questions or concerns the employer has can be addressed anytime with the Transition Specialist who oversees the program.

Off-Campus Internship Sites (Past & Present):

- Town of Winchester
- Gloria's Pizzeria
- The Jenks Center
- Manganaro NorthEast
- Winchester Hospital
- Teddie Peanut Butter
- Brio Integrated Theatre
- Lynch Elementary School – Integrated Preschool

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Frequently Asked Questions...



How is my business connected with a student intern?

The Transition Specialist will bring the student(s) to meet you prior to starting any position. If the position is a match, the Transition Specialist will ensure the student(s) is/are prepared and ready to work.

Is there anything in writing to protect my interests?

Yes, the Transition Specialist will work out specific details with you including start and end dates, job duties, hours the student will work, etc. These details will be written out by the Transition Specialist in a Community Internship Contract which will be signed by the Transition Specialist and you to ensure that both parties agree on the terms of the internship experience

Do I put the student on my payroll?

Students who are participating in the School to Work Program are enrolled in an internship program. However, you are welcome to hire a student if you wish.

What if I have a problem with the student's job performance, who do I call?

Students will follow procedures set forth in their Community Internship Contract. If these procedures are not followed or you have any questions or concerns, you should contact the Transition Specialist to address the problem. A meeting will be set up with you, the student and any other staff is necessary to rectify the situation.

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Frequently Asked Questions Continued...



Will a Job Coach be with the student everyday?

Not every student needs a Job Coach everyday so it will vary. At the beginning of the assignment a Job Coach will be with the student more frequently and as the student becomes more comfortable the Job Coach will pull back to a weekly basis if possible. The goal is to allow the student to gain as much confidence and independence at the work site as they can.

What are the hours the student will be working? Is it a regular shift?

Since this program is part of their Winchester High School curriculum students can intern during the school day (9:00 am – 2:30 pm). Most students have internships for a maximum of 2-3 hours per day for 2 days a week in this program, but this can change based on the needs of your business and the student.

How is a student working at my business reviewed?

On a weekly basis, the Job Coach will write a report for the Transition Specialist stating the progress that was made by the student. You are also welcome to fill out a quarterly progress report as well.

I'd like to hire the student who worked for me, is that allowed?

Yes, you are welcome to hire the student on to your payroll from the beginning of the program. Once the Community Internship Contract is complete, there are few options for the student – the contract can be renewed through the School To Work Program, you can hire the student independently of the program, or the student can move on to a new Community Internship Experience. These options will be discussed with you and the student during an exit interview.