

To: Board of Education

From: Kevin Harrell, director, student services
Lori Stithem, assistant director, special education

Re: USD 497 Project Search

Date: April 7, 2016

Background:

When graduation requirements have been met and the IEP team has determined that special education services are still required to address vocational and independent living needs, students with disabilities are eligible to receive continued transition services through the school year in which he or she reaches 21 years of age. Since it is the district's responsibility to provide these services, Lawrence Public Schools currently has transition programs in place to assist students, ages 18-21, in gaining the vocational and daily living skills necessary to achieve their post-secondary goals. Project Search is one of those transition programs.

Report:

The report will summarize current programming and highlight student and program successes. The cornerstone of Project Search is total immersion in a large organization or business. We are fortunate to have the opportunity to partner with not just one, but two host sites in the Lawrence community. Lawrence Memorial Hospital and the University of Kansas have partnered with Lawrence Public Schools since the inception of our Project Search programs in 2011.

Each of our two Project Search sites has a Project Search instructor and two job coaches to provide the identified transition services. The ultimate goal upon program completion is competitive employment utilizing the skills learned in the internships and throughout the program. Project Search provides real-life work experience combined with training in employability and independent living skills to help youth with disabilities make successful transitions from school to productive adult life.