

Special Education: Berrien County Transition Planning Programs

Transition Planning is the process in which students with disabilities develop a plan that will help them adjust to their next step in life. During the transition planning process, it is important to keep in mind that students with disabilities have different levels of impairment and capabilities; requiring the plan to be flexible to meet a variety of needs. It is also important to be aware of available resources and services that will help develop an individual's transition plan.

Our current programs include:



A Seal of Employability (SOE) represents an alternative pathway for high school special education students who, even with a Personal Curriculum, supplementary aids and services, modifications and/or accommodations and special education programming, are unable to meet the Michigan requirements for a high school diploma.



Occupational Education Programs are to provide entry level job skills. With this, Occupational Education is a designed program that will allow students access to specific career goals, which are outlined with student planning in a detailed curriculum that has educational and industry expectations. All of this is developed with specific school and community-based learning, with the end result of students being able to transition from the educational setting into the workforce.



Off to College is a free high school program designed by Berrien Regional Education Service Agency (Berrien RESA) and Lake Michigan College to help students prepare for their future. Off to College requires a 2-year commitment from the student (and his or her family). During the junior and senior years, students will participate in monthly seminars at Lake Michigan College. The seminars will teach them how to become successful.



School to Career is a program to provide students with a planned program of job training and other employment experiences related to a chosen career. There are six major recognized types of work-based learning experiences for secondary students in Michigan, as well as an additional school-related component, regarding the employment of minors as follows: 1) Job Shadow (Visitor), 2) Volunteer, 3) Work-Based Learning: Non-CTE programs (paid and unpaid student learner), 4) Work-Based Learning: State-Approved CTE programs (paid and unpaid student learner), 5) In-District/In-School Placement (unpaid student learner), and 6) Minor Employee with a work permit.



Project Search is a one year transition program which provides training and education leading to employment for individuals with disabilities. The program occurs on-site at Lakeland Health which has the commitment to support people with disabilities in the workplace.



Transition Clubs are offered in high schools in Berrien County. Students gain leadership skills in a supported and fun environment. They learn to run the meetings and choose activities as a group. Transition topics of adult living, career/employment, post-secondary education/training, and community involvement are the basis of activities. The facilitation teacher and Transition Coordinator guide and support the students' choices.