

# Project Skills: Step-by-Step – for Special Ed Teachers

1. If a student is at least 16 and has a work-related goal on his or her IEP, then contact your Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to inquire about Project Skills. (Project Skills is for students that need support in getting or keeping a job). Your VR counselor will need these items to determine eligibility for Project Skills:
  - IEP
  - Latest adult psychological exam & achievement testing results
  - Student medical records (Voc Rehab will get these from the student's doctor)

**Sioux Falls VR Office:** 1-800-265-9679      **Yankton VR:** 1-800-265-9677      **Brookings VR:** 688-4280
2. Once the VR office has determined the student is eligible, the next step is to secure a jobsite. Think about:
  - Will your district provide **transportation** to the Project Skills job if the student needs it?
  - Who will be the student's **job coach**? Many schools use an educational assistant/paraprofessional.
  - Who is monitoring the success of the job placement throughout the year?
  - What kind of **schedule** will work best for your student? Can the business accommodate this?
3. **While the student is waiting for the job to be set up, the student can work on these forms:**
  - Voc Rehab will require: IPE form signed by the student
  - **East Dakota will handle:** W-4, I-9, payroll form, and work agreement (East Dakota: ph: 367-7680 x120)

*\* East Dakota & your Voc Rehab counselor will make ensure that these are completed correctly.*
4. Teachers: remember to track how much time you are spending on your Project Skills work. Monthly reports are required, but we'll help you get started. These monthly reports serve two purposes: 1) ensuring that your school is meeting the 30% match that is required by the VR office. 2) Helping to ensure that adult services are available if needed. East Dakota and/or your Voc Rehab counselor can help you to start these reports.

**EXAMPLES:** These are the kinds of work that should be documented on your monthly reports:

- Job development (finding a job, sitting in the contract meeting, phone calls related to the job hunt, etc.)
- Job Coaching (teaching the student how to do the job or how to fill out the time card)
- Site Monitoring (phone calls, site visits, emails to the supervisor; time spent following up with both the student & the supervisor to ensure the student is doing well on the job)

## Other points of interest:

- Student earns minimum wage; currently \$8.50/hour. Paychecks: every two weeks. Timecards are turned in weekly.
- Student becomes a "temporary employee" of the State of South Dakota, regardless of their job site.
- Voc Rehab pays the student's wages & worker's compensation insurance (in case they are injured at work)
- Students generally are awarded 250 hours of Project Skills work, and those hours are worked during the school year
- The Project Skills job cannot be at a church, or at the student's school. Cannot work for family, either.
- Students that are approved for Project Skills can start working after Oct.1. Some schools use Aug/Sept for lining up the job and job coach, and for filling out the payroll paperwork. But students can start jobs anytime throughout the year.

For More Information Contact:

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