

InVEST – Transition

In Vocational, Educational, and Social Transition

Sites:

InVEST North: Northwest Tech Center, 7008 Northland Drive, Suite 100 Brooklyn Park, MN 55428

InVEST South: South Education Center, 7450 Penn Ave North, Richfield, MN 55423

Target Population

The target population includes transition students, ages 17-21, who are receiving special education services primarily for Emotional Behavioral Disorder (EBD) and needing social, academic & transition skills development. This program may include students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

Student Profile

Most life areas are impacted by chronic mental illness. Some students with a chronic mental illness diagnosis are more likely to exhibit serious and persistent behavior in the community, home, school, and work. Student ability level ranges from borderline to gifted ability. Students have high needs in the transition areas: Post-Secondary Education and Training, Employment, Community Participation, Recreation/Leisure, and Home Living/Daily Living Skills.

Mission/Goals

InVEST students will learn skills to manage their mental health needs in order to achieve a safe level of maximum self-sufficiency. Students will successfully master academics, functional academics, and transition skills. This will be achieved through individualized interventions, and through school, community and vocational based experiences. Students will increase understanding of their own mental health needs, and improve personal responsibility and self-advocacy skills in order to manage their needs in the five areas of transition.

Components

Academic Skills:

- Provide appropriate academic instruction to prepare students for functioning in their community, including post-secondary education opportunities.
- Provide appropriate vocational instruction, including community-based vocational experiences, to prepare students for community employment.
- Provide appropriate instruction and opportunities to engage in independent living to prepare students for young adulthood in the community.
- Provide appropriate social/interpersonal skills instruction and opportunities to establish social relationships with peers.
- Provide appropriate leisure and recreational skills and opportunities for inclusive recreation activities.
- Provide instructional programs tailored to individual needs and interests.
- Provide instruction in reading, writing, and math.
- Provide instruction in preparation for Minnesota Basic Standards Testing, if needed.

Social/Behavior:

- Personal responsibility/self-advocacy—assist students in developing skills to take responsibility for their own life plans, to understand their mental health diagnosis and ways that it affects their life, and learn to articulate accommodations needed in school, community, home, and the work place.
- Students will learn strategies to cope with symptoms of their mental health diagnosis to maximize their safety and functioning at school and in the community.
- Students prepare for and lead individualized transition planning (IEP) meetings focusing on strengths, capabilities, interests, and preferences.
- Students are taught decision-making skills and provided opportunities to make real life, meaningful decisions.
- Students are given opportunities to learn about and/or directly experience an array of community options (e.g., different community jobs)
- Students have opportunity for instruction in family life sex education, chemical health education, in problem solving and development of age appropriate social skills.
- Mental health and chemical health counseling support available through school social worker and school psychologist, and in partnership with outside community agencies.

- Facilitate social inclusion of students with disabilities into regular age appropriate school setting at Hennepin Technical College (HTC) and nearby community colleges.
- Positive school/community milieu

Vocational Skills:

- Evaluation of work skills and habits and how their mental health diagnosis affects their employment potential
- Developments of advocacy skills for employment and post secondary environments.
- Community-based vocational training with job coaching, as needed.
- Strong school to community employment linkages – Career and technical training options in the community are: career exploration, supported competitive employment and independent competitive employment
- Opportunity to take Level I, II, III classes at HTC and community college classes with tutoring and note taking.

Family/Interagency Collaboration:

- Collaborate and coordinate with families and agencies to access needed services to meet the mental health needs of students in the transition planning process
- Learn about medications and develop self advocacy skills in working with medical providers.
- Coordination of the transition planning process from school to community.
- Assist families in process of seeking guardianship, if needed
- Access to co-located mental health services and county case management.

Community-Based Services/Interagency Collaboration:

- MTCO Bus Training, Metro Mobility, Drivers Permit Preparation
- Recreation/leisure activities
- Home living in an apartment setting.
- Community-based/career exploration and employment.
- Community-based training in accessing the community.

Program Core

Licensed Ratio: 4.3

Non-Licensed Ratio: 3.7

Teacher-to-Student Ratio: 1:9-10

Staffing Includes:

Program Core

- Licensed/Highly Qualified Instructors
- Educational Assistants

Support Staff

- Program Facilitator
- School Social Worker
- Work Experience Coordinator
- School Psychological Services
- Nursing Services

Other Support Staff, as needed

- Assistive Technology Specialist
- Audiologist
- Autism Specialist
- Behavior Specialist
- Communication Disorder Specialist (CDS)
- Due Process Facilitator
- Educational Audiology Specialist
- Low Incidence Specialists (Deaf/Hard of Hearing [D/HH], Blind/Visually Impaired [B/VI], and Physical/Health Disabilities [PHD] teachers)
- Job Coaches
- Materials Production Specialist (Braille, etc.)
- Occupational Therapy (OT) Staff
- Orientation & Mobility (O&M) Specialist
- Physical Therapy (PT) Staff
- Sign Language Interpreter

For further information contact

InVEST North: Darla Jackson, Program Facilitator

InVEST South: Robin Thomas, Program Facilitator