

The Benefits To Businesses

- Access to an untapped labor pool
- Potential of finding good employees for your business
- Be able to provide training and work experience for students within your community
- Gain knowledge about services provided to individuals with disabilities

Quotes.....

“It's been extremely rewarding watching our Project Skills team member grow in confidence and productivity through her work at Camille's. We developed a simple work outline for her daily projects and she continues to become a more outgoing and independent team member.”

-Jennifer E., Co-Owner

“We are so grateful for the opportunity to work with our Project Skills student; I believe our staff has gained as much from the experience as he has. We hope to have a Project Skills student every year.”

-South Dakota Bureau of Human Resources



Project Skills Video

[http://dhs.sd.gov/
rehabservices/
servicesandprograms.aspx](http://dhs.sd.gov/rehabservices/servicesandprograms.aspx)

For additional information or assistance in bringing the Project Skills program into your place of business, contact one of the following:

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A Business Resource to Providing Work Experiences for High School Students



Project Skills



How Does it Work?

- Student identifies jobs that they are interested in.
- School representative contacts area employers to locate possible jobs that match the student's interest areas.
- Once an appropriate work experience site is located, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselor will meet with student and school representative to sign a Work Experience Agreement.
- The work experience can last from a minimum of 30 to a maximum of 250 hours per year. During this time, students are paid current minimum wage by the state.



What is the Employer's Role?

- Provide participants appropriate supervision and training, safe working conditions and adhere to all child labor laws.
- Assist students to maintain accurate time and attendance records.
- Provide feedback on progress of students to school staff.
- Provide adequate general liability insurance. (There is no financial obligation of benefits or wages by the employer.)

What is Project Skills?

Project Skills is a paid work experience program for high school students with disabilities. The program is a cooperative arrangement between the state Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies and the local school districts.

Why Project Skills ?

Often times, students with disabilities don't get an opportunity to gain paid work experience while in high school. Although willing, most employers cannot afford to provide the training and supports students frequently require on their first job.



Purpose of Project Skills

Project Skills provides student the opportunity to learn different skills in a variety of job placements, with the assistance of a job coach.

Who Pays for the Program?

SD Vocational Rehabilitation Programs (VR) provides funding for wages, FICA, worker's compensation, and other costs. VR may be able to pay for other items needed to assist students to be successful in their employment experience while participating in Project Skills.

The local school district provides matching funds (generally in-kind) for Project Skills by providing job development, job coaching and on-site monitoring. These services can be provided directly by the school district or may be purchased from another agency, such as an education cooperative, Community Support Provider, Career Learning Center, or other agency approved by SD VR programs.

Who is Eligible?

The state VR counselor makes the decision on eligibility for Project Skills. In order to participate in the program, students must:

- Apply for and be determined eligible for VR services through either the Division of Rehabilitation Services or Service to the Blind & Visually Impaired.
- Be 16 years or older.
- Be enrolled in high school and striving to meet academic and attendance requirements.