



School Improvement Annual Report 2007-08

The mission of the Robert G. Lutz School for Work Experience is to provide experiences and training to promote each student's transition from school to community.

Lutz School provides service to students, ages 18 to 26, who have mild to moderate cognitive impairments. As of May 2008, our enrollment was 226. Our average daily attendance rate last year was 89%.

Status of School Improvement

School improvement efforts focus on improving both student behavior and work performance. The entire staff prioritizes areas and develops goals for our students, with parents invited to participate. For the 2007–08 school year our improvement goals were:

Improve pre-vocational skills.

The Lutz Pre-Vocational Skills checklist measures skills needed to perform successfully at a job. It consists of 20 work-related skills in three categories: work behavior, personal behavior, and personal care. This year our students mastered an average of nearly 12.5 of the 20 skills; the four-year average is 13.5. Though we are pleased with our students' achievement, the score is lower than our average. This may be due, in part, to the fact that in the past two years we added 30 to 40 new students who have not yet learned good work skills. At the same time, we lost many "veteran" students whose skills improved while in our program.

Increase student achievement and success in the community.

Our curriculum is now aligned with the Addressing Unique Educational Needs (AUEN) curriculum. The next step will be to align it with the Michigan Extended Grade Level Expectations. Our students who participate in the work study transition program are assessed and their evaluations become part of their resume and portfolio.

Improve positive student behavior.

The staff completed an online survey that was used to determine schoolwide behavioral expectations and to prioritize them. Our slogan is "PAWS"—Practice responsibility, Act kind and respectfully, Work hard, and Stay safe. It will be implemented in the fall of 2008.

Curriculum

The basic goal of our work-based curriculum is to teach students to be contributing members of the community. Our unique curriculum is a compilation of AUEN's Supported Independence performance expectations, and annual goals and short-term instructional objectives created by staff.

Work is an essential part of our curriculum and Lutz students travel to a variety of community job-training sites, such as hospitals, businesses and nonprofit organizations. A grant between the MISD and the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth – Rehabilitation Services (MDLEG-RS) enabled 110 students to participate in short-term job exposures, vocational assessments and job placements. Others remain at school to learn the skills needed to work competitively. Contract jobs brought into Lutz provide students with work-related opportunities.

Student Achievement

The Individual Education Plan (IEP) team determines the scope of each student's curriculum. Each student's progress is assessed individually and reported to parents. The Lutz Pre-Vocational Skills Checklist, along with structured observations, are used yearly to determine present level of performance. Students who have participated in Transition I and II programs travel with a job coach to a work environment where they are tested by an evaluator from an adult service agency on many factors related to their ability to work. The evaluator provides a recommendation regarding future employment outcomes for our students. Twenty-seven students took part in this type of assessment last year. Of those, 12 were recommended for competitive employment, 11 for supported employment and 4 for work center programs.

Use of Technology

Technology is an important tool which we use in a variety of ways—for functional academics, for resume writing and for filling out job applications.

Visual aids, computers, digital cameras and adaptive devices further help us meet students' individual needs by increasing their independence and communication skills. These devices help students understand schedules and routines, provide a way to strengthen their recall of events, and give them an outlet for leisure time.

Use of Community Resources

Each day at least half of our students receive part of their instruction in the community. Besides job training, students learn to take part in leisure activities, eat at area restaurants, and learn to travel around the county using the public transit system. A satellite classroom is housed at the Macomb Mall, taking advantage of all the resources in the area.

Each week a counselor from MDLEG-RS is at Lutz to discuss job openings and potential placements. Through our joint efforts, 13 students were placed in competitive jobs. Eleven students are now in job development, working with agencies for competitive employment. One hundred ten students took part in our Transition I and II programs at nine community work sites. Our students toured several different programs they will use once they leave school, including Comprehensive Services for Developmentally Disabled (CSDD), Creative Employment Opportunities (CEO), ARC of Macomb, Social Resources, Inc. (SRI) and the respite home. Completers and their families participated in a seminar on Social Security sponsored by United Cerebral Palsy. Several students took part in mock interview sessions with MRS staff and were given feedback on their performance.

Staff Development

Lutz staff participate in a wide range of staff development activities that support our school improvement goals. Last year staff attended various conferences or received training in psychology, transition, healthy nutrition, health education, positive behavior support, school improvement frameworks, curriculum, autism, diabetes management, neurobiology, and cardiac care. The staff is certified in Non-Violent Crisis Intervention techniques. All of our teachers meet the “highly qualified” standards of the federal *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) act and IDEA.

Parent Participation

Last year, nearly 81% of parents attended IEP team meetings and 92% came to parent conferences. We have an active parent group that meets monthly to discuss current issues. Their fundraising efforts provide our students with special activities and events. They also sponsor informational meetings for parents in the evening when Lutz students are enjoying a dance. Transition planning provides another opportunity for parental involvement.

Points of Pride!

- Lutz students volunteer at places such as Martha T. Berry and Henry Ford hospitals, Church of Christ Assisted Living and Care Center, Second Hand Rose, area restaurants, shops, churches and fraternal organization organizations.
- Our Student Council sponsored several charitable events, including collecting school supplies for Macomb County’s homeless children on “Make a Difference Day.” During the holidays, they adopted a family, providing them with gifts and food. They also collect “Coins for Caring” each week and donate the money to local charities.
- Our school has four beautiful new classrooms and a student commons. Our expanded gymnasium soon will have a “healthy life style” room.
- Our Community Transition satellite classroom continues to flourish at Macomb Mall.
- One of our paraprofessionals received the Angela O’Donnell Paraprofessional of the Year award from the MISD.



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