

SDSU/Brookings Project SEARCH
Intern Handbook
2023-2024



Brookings

Project | SEARCH

South Dakota

Welcome

Welcome to SDSU/Brookings Project SEARCH! The SDSU/Brookings Project SEARCH staff will work hard to ensure this will be a successful year for everyone. We will demonstrate professional conduct, impartial direction, objective advice, and individualized recommendations, ultimately designed to teach and establish the standards over the course of this program. These expectations will prepare interns for the competencies expected in the business world. Project SEARCH interns are expected to conduct themselves as an employee would, and follow similar standards. In addition, since Project SEARCH is a Brookings School District program, interns must adhere to the Brookings School District policies and procedures, unless otherwise specified. The District policies and procedures can be found on the Brookings School District website: www.Brookings.k12.sd.us

This handbook will acquaint you with the details of our program. It is a guide and is subject to change as needs arise, or based on decisions made by the Project SEARCH Leadership Team, Brookings School District, Director of Special Services, Board of Education, the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Project SEARCH Coordinator, and/or Project SEARCH Skills Trainer. We are confident you will have a great year with a clear understanding of our expectations and an enthusiastic and committed attitude.

Contact Information

Parents and guardians should address any questions and concerns regarding an intern's work experience with Project SEARCH staff. Please do not contact job site supervisors directly.

JaColby Anderson (Coordinator)
688-4407 (Office) 695-9052 (Cell)
Email: jacolby.anderson@k12.sd.us

Ann Pavek (Skills Trainer)
688-4407 (Office) (Cell) 605-695-7544
Email: ann.pavek@advancebkg.com

Internship Rotations

Over the course of the year, interns will complete three (3) 10-12 week unpaid rotations. The first rotation will be selected for the interns; however, they will have the opportunity to express preferences for the second and third rotations. Project SEARCH staff will work hard to honor said requests. In addition, the third rotation may involve competitive employment. The goal of Project SEARCH is for interns to gain as many transferable job skills as possible to obtain competitive employment. To this end, interns may complete 2 similar rotations; the third must be distinctly different. While unpaid internships, the Department of Rehabilitation Services provides each intern a monthly stipend.

Curriculum and Instructional Outcomes

SDSU/Brookings Project SEARCH follows the national Project SEARCH curriculum. Interns receive direct instruction on topics that may include but are not limited to: Team Building, Workplace Safety, Technology, Self-Advocacy, Maintaining Employment, Financial Literacy, Health and Wellness, and Preparing for Employment.

Progress

The performance will be evaluated in the following areas: attendance, class participation, attitude, work evaluations, and as required by the IEP. The Skills Trainer, Coordinator, or Supervisor will complete work evaluations. We will make every effort to ensure that intern progress is communicated through newsletters, emails, phone calls, and progress meetings. This communication ensures all parties support the intern's transition and job goals. Any communication or meetings will involve all or some of the

following: Coordinator, Skills Trainer, intern, family members/guardians, Career Advantage staff, Director of Special Services, and DRS representative(s).

Skills Training

The Skills Trainer(s) is (are) here to provide indirect support while you complete your internship rotations. They will help you learn your tasks and understand your expectations. It is your job to ask for help when you need it. Skills Trainers DO NOT work side-by-side with interns all day long. The goal of Project SEARCH is independence. You are expected to take directions from your supervisor and ask questions when you need help.

Division of Rehabilitation Services

The Division of Rehabilitation Services pays part of the costs for interns to attend Project SEARCH and receive skills training. To receive those services, interns are expected to attend required regularly scheduled meetings with his/her VR counselor. Lack of participation could result in loss of services or a portion of the monthly stipend.

Meals

Interns have several options for lunch. They can bring lunch from home (the Project SEARCH office and most rotation sites will have a refrigerator and microwave available) or purchase it from the various on-campus options. Lunch break will generally be 30 minutes in length; however, this may vary depending on rotation site policy and/or workload. Meal times will vary depending on how busy their job location is.

Interns working with Sodexo will be issued a meal card loaded with \$45 each week. They will learn budgeting skills through the Project SEARCH curriculum. The meal card may be used to buy meals at various locations on campus that accept the employee meal card. Interns must follow Sodexo's employee meal card policy. Meal cards will be returned to Sodexo after the intern's rotation; any lost cards will be replaced at the intern's expense.

Medication

Any Project SEARCH intern who takes medication during the workday must be responsible for taking it him- or herself. Medications will not be stored in the Project SEARCH office. If a special medication need arises, please notify the Project SEARCH Coordinator.

Transportation

Various transportation options are available in the Brookings area. Transportation can be provided by BATA, taxi, home school district, intern/parent/guardian, and the Brookings School District under certain circumstances.

Dress Code

Interns must follow the dress code of the job site (such as black pants and slip-resistant shoes). Closed-toe shoes and nice pants or jeans are required. Shorts, sweatpants, T-shirts, tank tops, camisoles, sandals, and sweatshirts are prohibited unless your direct supervisor has issued or approved the attire. Hair must be clean, cut, combed, groomed, and maintained, antiperspirant, deodorant, and products that eliminate body odor MUST be used. Bathing and teeth brushing should occur daily. Dressing in layered clothing is recommended so interns are prepared for the various indoor and outdoor temperature changes they may experience over the course of a day.

Tobacco and Alcohol Use

As per Brookings School District policy, tobacco use, or being under the influence of controlled substances/and or alcohol during school-sponsored activities/programs is prohibited. In addition, SDSU policy prohibits any item made of tobacco intended for human consumption, including cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, and smokeless tobacco. Tobacco products include vapor-based products including all forms of tobacco, nicotine delivery devices, and e-cigarettes that have not been approved by the FDA for cessation.

Respectful Environment

Project SEARCH believes everyone has the right to work in a respectful environment, free of discrimination and harassment. Each intern and each employee has the right to be treated with respect and dignity. Any conduct, comment, or overt or subtle gesture likely to offend someone will be addressed swiftly and seriously. Interns will also be required to follow the specific harassment policies of the participating Jobsite hosts. If an intern feels he/she is the victim of discrimination and/or harassment, complaints can be filed with:

Title IX/EEO Coordinator
(605) 688-4128
Administration Building Room 318

Attendance/ Unexcused Tardy Policy

Interns are required to call the Coordinator/Teacher to alert him/her of absences before 7:30 a.m. All interns are allowed 10 absences per semester, per Brookings School District policy. However, many job rotations allow only 7 absences per year. Absences over 7 will require a meeting with the rotation supervisor to determine appropriate corrective action.

- 1st Unexcused tardy-verbal warning that is documented
- 2nd Unexcused tardy-verbal warning that is documented
- 3rd Unexcused tardy-written warning that is documented and signed by intern
- 4th Unexcused tardy-written warning that is documented and signed by intern
- 5th Unexcused tardy-meeting with team and parents to decide further action

Approximate Daily Schedule

7:30 a.m.	Arrive at SDSU
7:30-8:15 a.m.	Instruction
8:15 a.m.	Leave for job site
2:00 p.m.	Return to office
2:30 p.m.	Day Ends

Calendar and Early Dismissals

Project SEARCH follows the Brookings School District calendar; therefore, days off, early dismissals, snow days, etc. will all be under the district calendar. Interns should check local sources for weather-related announcements. Interns' contact information is included in the School Reach system.

Project SEARCH will start August 14 with the first week running 7:30-12:00. The last day will be May 3, 2024.

Approved 3/14/22

Calendar 2023-2024

JULY 2023						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

AUGUST 2023						
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27	28	29	30	31		

Early Release days for School Improvement Planning (Early Release Every Wednesday)						
August 16 - New Teacher In-Service						
August 17 & 18 - Staff Development						
August 21 & 22 - Back-2-School Days by Appointment						
August 23 - All Student First Day of School						

SEPTEMBER 2023						
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OCTOBER 2023						
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September 4 - Labor Day Holiday - NO SCHOOL						
October 6 - Staff Development - NO SCHOOL						
October 9 - Native American Day - NO SCHOOL						
October 20 - End of 1st Quarter						
October 30 - Evening PT Conferences (conferences begin at 4:00pm and conclude at 7:30pm)						

NOVEMBER 2023						
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DECEMBER 2023						
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30	31					

November 2 - Evening PT Conferences (conferences begin at 4:00pm and conclude at 7:30pm)						
November 3 - All Day PT Conferences - NO SCHOOL (conferences begin at 8:00am and conclude at 3:20pm)						
November 22 - Comp Day (for evening conferences) - NO SCHOOL						
November 23 & 24 - Thanksgiving - NO SCHOOL						
December 15 - Noon Dismissal (Hosting the Bell Debate)						
December 19 - End of 2nd Quarter/1st Semester						
December 20 - January 3 - Winter Break - NO SCHOOL						

JANUARY 2024						
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FEBRUARY 2024						
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January 15 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day - NO SCHOOL						
February 12 & 15 - As Needed/Requested ECE-5 Evening PT Conferences (conferences begin at 4:00pm and conclude at 7:30pm)						
February 16 - ECE-5 Comp Day (for evening conferences) - NO SCHOOL for ECE-5						
February 19 - President's Day - NO SCHOOL						

MARCH 2024						
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APRIL 2024						
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March 8 - End of 3rd Quarter						
March 28 - April 1 - NO SCHOOL						
April 29 - NO SCHOOL						

MAY 2024						
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30	31					

JUNE 2024						
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
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May 20 - Last Day of School - End of 4th Quarter/2nd Semester (Noon Dismissal)						
May 21 - Staff Development - Last Day for Teachers						
May 26 - High School Graduation - 2:00 p.m.						

End of 1st Quarter - October 20 (42 student days)
 End of 2nd Quarter - December 19 (40 student days)
 1st Semester 82 days
 End of 3rd Quarter - March 15 (45 days)
 End of 4th Quarter - May 20 (47 days)
 2nd Semester 92 days
 174 student contact days + 4 Staff Development days = 178 teacher days
 Make up days will be added to the end of the school year

Important School Times						
	First Bell	School Start	Teacher Line M, T, Th, F	Student Line Wednesday	Supervisor Start	Breakfast Start
BHS	8:10am	8:15am	3:25pm	2:25pm	7:30am	7:30am
MMS	8:00am	8:15am	3:22pm	2:22pm	7:30am	7:30am
Camelot	8:05am	8:15am	3:22pm	2:22pm	7:30am	7:30am
D. Prairie	8:15am	8:20am	3:22pm	2:22pm	7:30am	7:30am
Hillcrest	8:15am	8:20am	3:22pm	2:22pm	7:30am	7:30am
Medary	8:15am	8:20am	3:22pm	2:22pm	7:30am	7:30am

Get the App! For a full listing of district events and activities, download the smart device app. Search in your app store for "Activities Scheduler" (the icon is a blue hat). After opening the app, click "GO" to set-up our school. Find & click on "South Dakota" in the list, find & click on "Eastern South Dakota Conference" in the list, find & click on "Brookings" in the list. That should pull up our district's complete activities/events schedule. A quick easy way to see all of the Brookings School District activities.

Technology – Email, Cell Phones, Electronics, and Personal Items

Personal cell phone use (phone calls and texts) is not allowed during classroom or work. All cell phone ringers must either be on *silent* or *vibrate*. Project SEARCH staff strongly discourages interns from bringing electronics and personal items to work. Should an intern choose to bring such items to work, it is at the intern's risk. Project SEARCH and job site staff are not responsible for personal items that become lost, misplaced, damaged, and/or stolen. Unless otherwise specified, personal email, cell phones, and electronic devices may not be used, except during breaks.

Computer/Technology Guidelines

All Project SEARCH interns will be issued a laptop computer at the start of the year. **The intern in whose name a system account and/or computer hardware is issued will be responsible at all times for its appropriate use.** Non-compliance with the policies of the Brookings School District and Project SEARCH Computer Use Policy will result in disciplinary action. Electronic mail, network usage, and all stored files shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by staff to ensure appropriate use. The District and Project SEARCH cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to violations of computer crime laws. Contents of e-mail and network communications are governed by the South Dakota Open Records Act; proper authorities will be given full access to all requested information.

All Interns agree to abide by the following:

- 1) Interns will have access to all available forms of electronic media and communication that support the educational goals and objectives of the Brookings School District and the Project SEARCH Program.
- 2) Interns are responsible for their ethical and educational use of the technology resources of the Brookings School District, Project SEARCH, and the Department of Rehabilitation Services.
- 3) Access to the Brookings School District, Project SEARCH, and the Department of Rehabilitation Services technology resources is a privilege, not a right.
- 4) Transmission of any material that is in violation of any federal or state law is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to the following: confidential information, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, and computer viruses.
- 5) Any attempt to alter data, the configuration of a computer, or the files of another user, without the consent of the individual, campus administrator, technology administrator, Program Coordinator, or Skills Trainer will be considered an act of vandalism and subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the discipline procedures.
- 6) Do not access, use, or change computer files that do not belong to you.
- 7) Do not reveal your full name, phone number, home address, social security number, credit card numbers, password, or other people's passwords.
- 8) Remember that storage is not guaranteed to be private or confidential; **the District, Project SEARCH, and/or DRS staff may access anything on your computer at any time, including email.**

9) If you inadvertently access a website containing obscene, pornographic, or otherwise offensive material, notify the Program Coordinator or Skills Trainer immediately so such sites can be blocked from further access. This is not merely a request but a responsibility.

10) Interns should maintain high integrity concerning email content. Always use appropriate language. Do not transmit language/material that is profane, obscene, abusive, or offensive to others.

11) Do not send mass e-mails, chain letters, or spam. Do not private chat during class.

The aforementioned is a guide and is subject to change as needs arise, or based on decisions made by the Project SEARCH Leadership Team, Brookings School District, Director of Special Services, Board of Education, Division of Rehabilitation Services, Project SEARCH Coordinator, and/or Project SEARCH Skills Trainer.

Discipline Policy/Non-Acceptance

In the case where interns do not demonstrate through behavior or words a commitment to the goals and expectations laid out by the Project SEARCH Program, the Project SEARCH Leadership Team will assess the need for adaptations, suspension, voluntary withdrawal, or a discharge from the program.

With justifiable grounds, the Project SEARCH Leadership Team and/or home school district reserves the right to discharge any intern from the program. Should the Team deem a discharge necessary, it will meet with the intern, parents/guardians, DRS, and all other relevant parties to determine a new, suitable program plan for the intern.

Acceptance in the Project SEARCH program is based on the national Project SEARCH program standards and selection criteria. The Project SEARCH Leadership Team uses these standards during the selection process to determine if an applicant is a good fit for the program.

Should the intern or representative feel the discharge or non-acceptance is unfair or unwarranted;, a grievance should be presented in writing to:

Level I: The Brookings School District Director of Special Services, who will schedule an informal discussion of said grievance. It is expected that many grievances may be resolved at this level. The conference will be held within five (5) workdays of the filing date, or at a time and date mutually agreed upon by both parties.

Level II: If the intern or their representative is not satisfied with the resolution at level one, an appeal can be made to the superintendent for an informal conference and discussion of said grievance.

Level III: Complaints that remain unresolved following any action of the superintendent may be referred in writing to the School Board for review. The Board will consider the issue at its next regularly scheduled meeting, and render its decision within five (5) work days. The Board's decision will be final unless appealed through the court system.

If an intern is determined to be ineligible for VR services or VR-funded services are discontinued, the intern will be informed in writing of the denial decision and due process procedures by their local VR Counselor.

I have received and understand the SDSU/Brookings Project SEARCH 2023-202 Intern Handbook.

Intern Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Project SEARCH Coordinator Signature

Date