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Further below are descriptions of the various programs within the South LaPorte County Special Education Cooperative that serve our community of unique learners.

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South LaPorte County Special Education Cooperative Programs & Additional Services

A.C.C.E.S.S.

(Accessing Community Connections, Empowering Student Success.)

The Access Young Adult Program is designed to provide instruction and support to 18-22-year-old young adults who are on an alternate diploma or certificate of completion track. The program focuses on providing instruction and support in the areas of functional life skills, money/purchasing skills, cooking skills, community integration and real-life work experiences, that is tailored to meet the individual needs of each young adult.

A.S.P.I.R.E.

(Accessing Services Promoting Independence in Real Experiences)

ASPIRE is an internship program within our cooperative that provides an young adult (student) with a disability an immersive work experience in an authentic work environment. The program staff use research based strategies to assist the intern in developing and identifying employment related skills, strengths, and vocational preferences. It is the expectation that the intern will be competitively employed. It is the goal of A.S.P.I.R.E. for the individuals to obtain optimal employment outcomes within two years of engagement in this program.

Assistive Technology

Assistive technology is a term that can be used to describe a way in which to enhance a student's learning. Assistive technology can include any item, piece of equipment, or software program that can increase, maintain, or improve a student's capabilities within the school/work setting. Assistive technology can range from low tech, such as a pencil grip, to high tech, such

as a communication software program. Here at SLPCSEC we have an Assistive Technology Team with members from our various school districts that we serve. This team works together to work on Assistive Technology referrals throughout our school districts. An AT evaluation and assessment is performed. Our Assistive Technology staff members will then work with our IEP teams to ensure that the student's needs are being met. Training, if needed, will be provided by our team to ensure that your child's teacher and other staff members know how to utilize the assistive technology being provided.

Autism Consultants

The SLPCSEC employs 2 full time Autism Consultants. They travel throughout the county to serve as a resource for not only our students and staff members but also for parents, general education staff members, and administrators. They help support all people on the IEP team by providing best practices for assessing and serving our students who are on the Autism Spectrum.

Behavioral Consultants

The SLPCSEC employs 4 behavior consultants. They travel throughout the county to serve as a resource for not only our students and staff members but also for parents, general education staff members, and administrators. They help support all those on the IEP team by providing services in a natural environment, school. Working within the school environment helps students make generalizations to accomplish their behavioral goals. Our behavior consultants work with the IEP team members to create, implement, and update your child's Behavior Intervention Plan by conducting a Functional Behavior Assessment.

Deaf- Hard of Hearing (DHH)

Currently, SLPCSEC has two Teachers of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing (TOD/HH). Our students are typically within their home school or school of choice. Our DHH teachers work with the students and staff providing consultation, support, and direct services. Students are learning parts of their ears, hearing aids, cochlear implants, and audiograms. They are being instructed on how to use technology, find captioning apps, and use resources to help them have better access to their environment. Our DHH teachers are also supplementing their academics with various language and reading skills to improve their proficiencies.

ELBS (Exceptional Learners Behavior Supports)

The ELBS program is designed for students who have difficulty managing their social-emotional skills, which can adversely affect their educational performance. The ELBS program is provided K-12, and the program is not specific based on disability type. Though the program serves students with Emotional Disabilities, students with other disabilities may access the program based on their educational needs in conjunction with a case conference decision. Handley Elementary hosts two classrooms for students K-4. The Kesling Campus hosts two classrooms for students 5-8. LaPorte High School hosts two classrooms for students 9-12. The goal is for students to access general education to the maximum extent with inclusion-based supports, but

we also recognize that some students may need a higher level of specially-designed instruction within the ELBS classroom for part or all of the instructional day.

ESC (Emotional-Sensory-Communication)

The ESC program is designed for students who have deficits in the areas of emotional/social skills, sensory regulation, and communication (expressive, receptive, and pragmatic). Similar to the ELBS program, ESC is not based specifically on disability type. Though the program serves many students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, it is not exclusive to that disability type. This program has a different scope in terms of the social, emotional, and behavioral approach for students who may have difficulty in regulating their behavior and emotions. We recognize that the function of behavior is often quite different for students in the ESC program as compared to students in the ELBS program. Indian Trail and Kingsbury Elementary currently host two classrooms each for students K-4. The Kesling Campus hosts two classrooms for students 5-8. LaPorte High School hosts one classroom for students 9-12. Again, the goal is for general education inclusion to the maximum extent appropriate, but some students may need a higher level of specially-designed instruction within the ESC classroom for part or all of the instructional day.

Life Skills

Some students here in LaPorte County need their educational goals met in an unconventional way. Here within our cooperative, we provide high quality academic instruction using an adapted curriculum to focus on the Core Content Connectors (alternate state standards) for students with more significant intellectual disabilities. In addition to adapted curriculum and applied courses, students participate in community outings, Reins of Life, and various other programs that can help our students gain more independence and thrive in the community. We also aim for general education inclusion for students, but we also want to ensure that their learning experiences are educationally beneficial and meaningful.

Preschool

After an assessment has been completed and an IEP has been created, students in our preschool program will be given opportunities to develop the necessary skills in order to be successful in a kindergarten classroom. Students who qualify may also receive speech/language services or related services such as OT/PT. Preschool programming is provided at the LaPorte Early Childhood Center (formerly Lincoln Elementary).

PT/OT

Our Physical and Occupational therapists work in conjunction with the student's IEP teams to complete evaluations and assessments, which will help determine what is needed for a student. Once a student is qualified for PT or OT the therapist will design and implement various interventions that allow students to benefit from their respective educational programming. Our PT and OT also act as a consultant to our parents, school personnel, and other members of the IEP team to provide recommendations, setting realistic expectations for student performance,

and determining necessary accommodations or modifications to the student's daily academic or physical environment in order to optimize the student's performance.

Reins Of Life

The K-12 School Program, formed in 2016, brings cognitive, physical, emotional and social progression to students within Special Education Life Skills and Emotional Development classes. The Reins of Life, Inc. partnership with the South LaPorte County Special Education Cooperative continues to impact students through movement, verbal and non-verbal communication of their horses and peer-to-peer interactions through Equine-Assisted Learning.

Equine-Assisted Learning (EAL) is a highly structured evidence-based program that also taps into the various ways of learning including auditory, visual and kinesthetic. EAL provides avenues for building empathy, rapport, feelings of acceptance, mental stimulation, socialization, and stress reduction while experiencing inclusiveness in the larger community therefore creating preferable conditions for reception of new information. The objective of EAL is to provide lessons that are emotionally impactful to transfer abstract theory to practical implications. Students experience secondary lessons that reinforce independent learning such as self-regulation skills, teamwork, time management within a non-judgmental and patient atmosphere. The ROL programs are great equalizers for people of all walks of life. By providing a safe and inclusive environment, focused on the present moment and immediate feedback shows fun in learning and pride in hard work.

Reins of Life, Inc. is a PATH Intl. (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship) Premier Accredited Center since 1978 whose mission is to improve the quality of life for children and adults with disabilities through equine-assisted activities and therapies. There are over 850 accredited centers around the world. Horseback riding is recognized as a beneficial mode of therapy by The American Physical Therapy Association and The American Occupational Therapy Association.

The Reins of Life, Inc. PATH Intl Certified Instructors lesson plans, with input and feedback from teaching staff, bring students hands-on experience and learning with horses, ponies and even a donkey! It is well documented that in order to promote active learning the emotional connection has to be established. Our alternative education support program offers a new method of learning that brings to life tactile experience that directly applies to learning objectives identified by the Indiana Department of Education. They might include elements of history, science, math and English. Lessons are built around goals of students and their class; examples include transitional or coping skills as well as a focus on fine and gross motor skills, communication, teamwork, empathy and trust. The movement of a horse and impact on balance while riding contributes to improved core and muscle strength as well as coordination. Students are also learning to read and use body language to communicate with the ROL Herd as well as their peers.

For more information about the Reins of Life, Inc. K-12 School Programs and other equine-assisted activities and therapies visit www.reinsoflife.org or reach the ROL Team directly at staff@reinsoflife.org .

Speech-Language

Here at SLPCSEC we understand that speech and language problems can make learning difficult. We can help your child with their speech and/or language struggles starting at age 3. Speech and/or language problems can affect your child's reading, writing, and spelling. Academics may not be the only area affected. Your child may struggle to understand social cues, which may affect their social development. After an evaluation, our highly trained SLP's and SLA's are able to develop an IEP based on your child's specific needs as related to speech and language.

Transition Services

When your child reaches the age of 14 or Grade 9 (whichever occurs first), we at SLPCSEC begin looking into transition services as part of the IEP process. These services include assessment and activities in order to reach future educational goals and/or future employment. Our transition coordinator partners with teachers, students, and parents to ensure a successful and smooth transition from school to work or post secondary education. The plan put into place is based on each individual child's strengths, skills, and interests.

Work Experience

As innovators in the field of Special Education, South LaPorte County Special Education Cooperative has been teaching employment and accompanying social skills to our students for over 25 years. The Work Experience Program is in conjunction with the ASPIRE program. Local employers, our "business partners", cover a wide range of employability skills, such as: bagging groceries, working at a coffee shop, learning shipping and receiving, running a dish machine in a commercial kitchen, bussing tables, and many other diverse skills dependent on the student's interest. The goal of the Work Experience Program is competitive employment after a student exits high school.

This unique opportunity is the beginning of South LaPorte County Special Education Cooperative vocational programming and its related topics. A student typically begins the Work Experience Program in 11th grade. As students' progress in their skill development and continue their services with South LaPorte County Special Education Cooperative, they may be invited to join our A.S.P.I.R.E. program or may attend our A.C.C.E.S.S. program, if eligible, after 12th grade. Each of these programs have the goal of employment after high school.