



# Savings Estimate



## Did You Know?

Ongoing SAF investment in Project SEARCH School to Work programs provides state savings while ensuring parents and students have the flexibility to choose the best pathway that best fits their individual needs.

While Michigan students with disabilities may be eligible for special education services until age 26, Project SEARCH has shown that not every student wants or needs to stay until that age. In fact, Michigan's Project SEARCH students exit school to enter the workforce at an average age of 21.5.

### 2023-24 School Year Group One

**102** Project SEARCH students age **21.5** leave school to enter workforce. Future cost to educate over next four years: **\$0.00**

### 2023-24 School Year Group Two

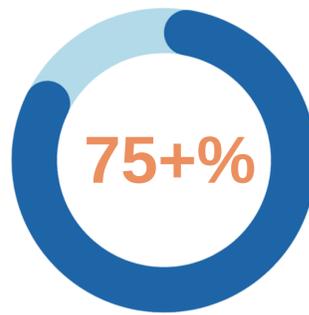
**102** non-Project SEARCH students age **21.5** stay in school until age-out at **26 years old**.

Future cost to educate over next four years:

**Foundation Allowance:** \$10,400  
102 students x \$10,400 x 4 years = **\$4.24M**

**District Cost to Educate Beyond Foundation**  
102 students x \$15,000\* x 4 years = **\$6.12M**

## Proven Success in Michigan!



**75-85%** of Project SEARCH graduates in Michigan secure competitive, integrated employment compared to a 19% national employment rate for people with disabilities

## \$10,360,000

One-year total savings to the state of Michigan: **\$10,360,000**  
(\$8,860,000 savings less \$1.5M SAF allocation)

## \$1 in SAF = \$7 back

**\$1.5M investment** → **7X returns** for Michigan students and communities.

## 4 Years

This savings is **fully realized within 4 years** of initial investment!

*77% of these Project SEARCH students obtained employment while only 19% of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are employed (According to the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council's 2019 report)*

*\*Conservative estimate from a district based on average cost of special education services beyond foundation.*



Learn More: [www.maase.org/project-search](http://www.maase.org/project-search)

# Invest in Michigan's Workforce with Innovative Programming

Project | SEARCH



Project SEARCH is a research based, business-led school-to-work program that prepares young adults with disabilities for competitive, integrated employment. With classrooms located inside of partner businesses, students receive training and real-world experience that helps them get jobs. The program provides savings to schools and more choices for students and families. Student interns become taxpayers in the workforce with discretionary income while making valuable contributions to their communities.

## Did You Know?

State funding began with Lt. Governor Brian Calley in the Michigan Health & Wellness Commission

Michigan has seen a 58% growth in the number of programs while employment outcomes increased from 66% to 85% over the last 5 years

The average age of Project SEARCH graduates across the state is 21.5, at which time they leave school and enter the workforce.

- THE ASK:**
- Restore Funding to \$1.5 million
  - Designate as ongoing funding
  - School Aid Fund: Sec. 99aa



## Why Funding Matters?



Expand public-private partnerships



Workforce development as interns find competitive integrated employment



Local program control with clear, significant return on investment

## The Challenge

The employment-population ratio is only 22% for people with disabilities. The unemployment rate is 2x more than people without disabilities.

## The Cost-Effective Solution

In Michigan, 85% of Project SEARCH participants found competitive, integrated employment leading to increased independence and a reduction in usage of public programs.

On average, interns complete the program at age 21.5, reflecting the program's focus on preparing young adults for meaningful careers. While special education services remain available through age 26, Project SEARCH equips participants with the skills and experiences needed to successfully enter the workforce when they are ready.

## Project SEARCH creates choices, workers and efficiencies



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