

THE LIFE SKILLS CONTINUUM

The Life Skills Continuum educates and provides related services to students from ages three through twenty-one with cognitive and/or physical disabilities. Learning environments provide practical instruction designed to focus on mastery of skills required for employment. Program options provide personal, social, and work experiences aimed at successful living and working within the community.

The Life Skills Continuum was designed to enable students to benefit from a full program of functional academic instruction aligned to the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. Direct classroom instruction, use of model apartments, and full use of the community are components of this program. In addition to core academic subjects, students participate in art, music, therapeutic recreation, and physical and health education. Physical, occupational, and speech therapy are provided as prescribed by each student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). Most students in these programs participate in the state-mandated Alternative Proficiency Assessment.

Life Skills programs include various settings appropriate to individual needs, and provide community and school inclusion options. Community-based instruction allows students to attain appropriate workplace skills, achieve exposure to aspects of an industry, and develop transferable skills. Teachers reinforce technical, occupational, and work-related skills on the job site and in the classroom. Job coaches assist students in obtaining and maintaining employment. All students and families are linked to adult service providers so they can continue to receive the supports needed to succeed in life.



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Bergen County Special Services (BCSS) is a unique county-wide public school district that offers a broad spectrum of special education programs and services for children and adults with disabilities. BCSS offers local school districts a wide range of programs, in the least restrictive environment, incorporating the most up-to-date technology to meet the requirements of students with diverse learning needs.



Bergen County Special Services School District

THE VISIONS PROGRAM

@

EMERSON

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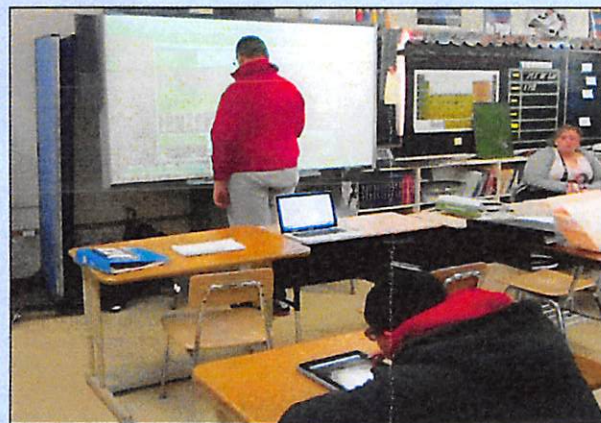
VISIONS @ Emerson Program

The VISIONS Program educates students with multiple disabilities in grades seven through twelve, ranging in age from thirteen to twenty-one. Students work in a supportive yet challenging environment designed to maximize educational opportunities within a traditional high school setting. Junior and Senior high school courses are aligned with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards; modifications are offered.

The program offers inclusion/mainstreaming opportunities based upon each student's abilities, interests, and grade level. Related services—physical, speech, and occupational therapy, as well as counseling—are available according to each student's Individual Education Plan. Transition services are an integral part of the program. Nursing services are also available.

VISIONS utilizes a number of strategies and assistive technologies to bring high-interest, relevant academic activities to its students. VISIONS staff members believe that in this safe environment, the greater the expectations, the greater the achievements.

Progress is reported ten times during the school year. Students receive quarterly Emerson report cards and mid-marking period reports, and two comprehensive Progress Reports from Bergen County Special Services. Progress reports are generated in January and June or to coincide with the I.E.P meeting. All students participate in the State-mandated PARCC assessments. Modifications are made according to each student's Individual Education Plan.



Available Services

- Social skills group
- Transitional services
- Postsecondary assistance
- Job coach
- Augmentative communication evaluation
- Assistive technology instruction
- Adaptive equipment evaluation and services
- Therapeutic Adventure
- State-of-the-art technology tools and applications
- Related Services per each student's IEP

VISIONS Teachers

- Are Highly Qualified—content area
- Utilize a team approach
- Employ state-of-the-art technology
- Provide instruction in self-contained classes
- Offer in-class support
- Maintain a low student/staff ratio
- Utilize current online curriculum tools and literacy initiatives

Academic Services

- Core curriculum standards with modifications
- Community-based experiential learning
- Career exploration activities
 - Portfolio including career interest, inventory, and resume writing
 - Daily living and functional skills incorporating math (consumer) and English skills (vocabulary building), as well as interviewing skills
- Assistive technology

Outcomes

- Each student will gain the required credits in the core curriculum standard courses to obtain a high school diploma
- Students will acquire job skills through internships in senior year Work Readiness
- Students will develop functional skills for successful participation in the community