



## Core Fidelity Components for Secondary/High School Programs

*High School graduation requirements need to be met*

### 1. Project LIFE will result in the following student outcomes:

- Successful participation in Project SEARCH®. ([www.projectsearch.us](http://www.projectsearch.us))
- Increase in overall employability skills.
- Connections to vocational rehabilitation services and other community rehab agencies.
- Graduation from high school with a variety of authentic work based learning experiences.
- A future of integrated, competitive employment in their community.

### 2. Project LIFE programs utilize the five transition quality indicators outlined in the "Taxonomy for Transition Programming 2.0".

(Kohler, 1996; Kohler, Gothberg, Fowler, & Coyle, 2016)

- **Student Focused Planning:** Project LIFE is student focused and students are an integral and active member of their individualized transition planning process.
- **Student Development:** Project LIFE is a combination of instruction focused on life skills, employment skills, vocational curricula, assessments, and course content needed to earn high school diploma, structured work experiences and individualized support services.
- **Interagency Collaboration:** Project LIFE incorporates a collaborative service delivery utilizing a framework that includes school personnel, students, parents, service providers and community businesses.
- **Family Involvement:** Project LIFE actively supports and encourages open and ongoing communication with family members to include input, feedback, and providing access to family training opportunities.
- **Program Structure:** Project LIFE is outcome based and flexible to meet student's individual needs related to high-school graduation requirements, transition to integrated employment opportunities, community participation learning opportunities and an increase in skills leading to a more independent adulthood.

### 3. Project LIFE students will meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Majority of students are at least 16 years old **OR** meet labor law requirements for assigned work-based learning environments.
- Students have documented disability that warrants their need for participation in Project LIFE.
- There is family support and evidence of a strong desire by student to increase overall independence and acquire competitive work skills leading to a future of integrated employment in their community.
- Majority of students display characteristics needed for current and future eligibility in local and state agencies that provide supports to individuals with disabilities.
- Students have appropriate number of credits toward graduation that will enable them to participate in the work-based learning hours for this program.

**4. Project LIFE instruction can be differentiated and utilizes a combination of authentic, experiential learning opportunities in and out of the school setting.**

- Project LIFE can be differentiated based on needs of students:
    - Level 101
      - ✓ At least 10 hours weekly participation in course of study and/or life skill learning.
      - ✓ At least 10 hours weekly participation in authentic work-based learning environment.
    - Level 201
      - ✓ At least 8 hours weekly participation in course of study and/or life skill learning.
      - ✓ At least 12 hours weekly participation in authentic work-based learning environment.
- Consideration for 37.5-hour school week
- Project LIFE includes opportunities for instruction on individualized goals.
  - Project LIFE provides the opportunity for students to participate in vocational exploration, vocational assessment and vocational training via participation in three different experiential work-based learning rotations per year.
  - Project LIFE provides the opportunity for students to gain and practice independent living and community participation skills in a variety of authentic learning environments.

**5. Project LIFE provides an 8 unit standards-based curriculum focusing on three learning domains: LIFE at Work, LIFE at Home, LIFE in the Community. Additional content includes lessons and Micro-enterprise development resources.**

- Curriculum Standards
  1. Safety skills
  2. Self-Determination Skills
  3. Independence
  4. Social and Communication Skills
  5. Financial Skills
  6. Technology Skills
  7. Physical & Emotional Well-Being
  8. Micro-Enterprise Fundamentals
- Micro-enterprise Implementation Guide and accompanying curriculum for development of student led and operated small business model is included and encouraged.
- Unit based and individual learning target assessments give the ability to gather baseline data, determine instructional needs and report student progress.
- Curriculum provides guidance for “**essential skill**” development based on differentiated levels of learning needs and directly correlates to success in Project SEARCH programs where available.
- Curriculum components, materials and accompanying resources are available via an interactive, on-line platform (Project LIFE Portal).

**6. Project LIFE staffing includes a qualified instructor and consistent skill trainers across all learning environments.**

- The Project LIFE instructor, skill trainers and key stakeholders from partner organizations have received orientation and training from Butler Tech, Project LIFE personnel.
- Dedicated and consistent staffing is available in classroom, life skill learning and work-based learning environments.
- The instructor is a full time, licensed special education or transition specialist who may act as program coordinator in conjunction with teaching. Duties may include: marketing, student recruitment, development of work-based learning environments, supporting and assessing all aspects of student development, course of study planning and delivery, single point of contact for Project LIFE stakeholders, etc.
  - ❖ *It is recommended that the instructor have at least 5 years of special education teaching experience or equivalent with transition age students and additional licensing/certification in the provision of transition to adulthood services.*
- The “skill trainers” serve a dual role by supporting students in all learning environments, thus providing continuity and the opportunity for the application, reinforcement and generalization of learned skills across settings.
- Ratio of skill trainers to students is no more than 1:5.

**7. Project LIFE personnel recognize that collaboration is critical to meet the unique needs of the students, families and program by utilizing the following program expectations.**

- A steering committee will be composed of members from education, department of vocational rehabilitation, local and state organizations supporting persons with DD, Project SEARCH staff, students, family members and community business partners.
- The steering committee will meet regularly (as determined during program implementation) to support Project LIFE needs and monitor progress.
- Recruitment of local businesses to provide a variety of authentic on-the-job training and other employment related experiences will occur.
- Referrals to VR, DD and other community rehabilitation agencies are implemented and agency representatives are included in meetings and communications.
- Regular communications with family members is provided and their participation in a minimum of 2 LIFE Planning Meetings and at least one Individual Education Program review is expected.
- Communication is maintained with personnel/teachers who are sending students in order to assist them in preparing students for successful participation in Project LIFE.

**8. All Project LIFE program locations will have a licensing agreement signed with Butler Tech.**

- All licensing fees have been paid to Butler Technology and Career Development Schools for access to materials and resources needed to implement and sustain Project LIFE. An annual licensing renewal fee will be paid starting in the second year of Project LIFE operation and every year thereafter.
- Assigned staff will enter Project LIFE data at designated time of year to include information related to:
  - Number of students beginning Project LIFE
  - Number of students completing Project LIFE
  - Age of student participants
  - Disability identification of student participants
  - Number of students eligible for local/state service agencies
  - Description of community based work experiences
  - Number of students meeting intended Project LIFE outcomes
  - Other non-identifiable data as requested