



SOUTH EASTERN SPECIAL EDUCATION

Serving Clay, Crawford, Jasper, Lawrence, and Richland Counties
Kim Kessler, Director

500 S. Scott Ave. Newton, IL 62448
618-455-3396 FAX 618-455-3134

March 3, 2025

Dear Parent/Guardian:

A teacher from your student's high school has indicated that your student would be a good candidate for the **STEP program (Secondary Transitional Experience Program)** for the 2025-2026 school year. STEP is a training/placement program that helps to prepare students with disabilities for transition to employment and community participation during and after high school. STEP is offered through your local high school in conjunction with South Eastern Special Education (SESE) and the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS).

STEP is an application program and all steps in the application process must be completed in order to be found eligible for the program. The minimum requirements to consider eligibility are:

- 16 years of age
- Junior status
- Presence of a mental or physical disability and have an IEP
- Appropriate behavior in school and in the community
- Passing all classes and is on-track for graduation
- Acceptable attendance (10 or fewer absences per semester)
- The desire to participate in the program.

Each student receives a grade and high school credit for successfully participating in the STEP program. If your student currently has a job, that job may be used as their STEP placement if the employer is willing to participate in the STEP program. While in the STEP program, each student has responsibilities, such as completing STEP assignments, completing and submitting monthly STEP timesheets, and following the rules and regulations of the STEP program. Students may be removed from STEP for failure to follow these rules.

If your student is interested in participating in the STEP program, you must complete and sign the application and the Request and Consent for Release of Records. These forms will be sent home with your student. On the application, a valid social security number is needed. I cannot process the application without it. The paper application will be shredded when the application is received at DRS.

Applications are due by **Friday, April 4, 2025**. Any applications received after this date will be considered for placement in the STEP program in January 2026.

A representative from the Division of Rehabilitation Services will contact you for an appointment to complete the STEP application process. It is mandatory that you complete this appointment for your student to be in the STEP program. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (618)455-3396 ext 229, (618)554-1602, or at svaughn@sese.org.

Sincerely,

Susan A Vaughn,
Pre-Vocational Coordinator