



Communication : C 1
Accessibility Advisory Committee
March 29, 2022
Agenda Item # 1

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Pilot Partnership with YCDSB Project SEARCH



March 29, 2022

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

The City recognizes that inclusion is an active, intentional, and continuous process to address inequities in power and privilege and build a respectful and diverse community that ensures welcoming spaces and opportunities to flourish for all.

- Position City of Vaughan as a leader amongst other municipalities in York Region
- Create an inclusive workplace culture with disability awareness and increased confidence
- Generate a pool of talented job seekers trained specifically for the business positions
- Receive job coaching support from the community employment agency after graduation
- Improve company morale, productivity and reduce turnover



Project SEARCH is an internationally successful transition-to-work model for young people with developmental or intellectual disabilities.

- Project SEARCH started at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center in 1996.
- There are now more than 650 Project SEARCH sites worldwide including 6 in Canada.
- Project SEARCH started in Ontario in 2019 and is recognized as best practice for business and public sector partnership.
- It has media and government attention.

Project SEARCH Locations in Canada

- Winnipeg (includes 7 school districts):
 - ❖ First partnership in Canada; operating 10+ years
 - Manitoba Hydro,
 - Government of Manitoba
 - Health Sciences Centre Winnipeg
- Halton DSB
 - Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital
- Halton Catholic DSB
 - Milton District Hospital
- Toronto DSB
 - Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital
 - Toronto Rehab-UHN
- Hamilton-Wentworth School DSB
 - Community Living
 - YMCA
 - Path Employment.



York Catholic District School Board

- The York Catholic District School Board (YCDSB) operates in the Regional Municipality of York.
- 85 Elementary and 16 Secondary schools across the Region's nine municipalities, with approximately 53,000 students
- YCDSB was successful incumbent for the Ministry of Education's *Developmental Disabilities Pilot: Student Transitions* project
 - one-year transition-to-work employment preparation program
- York Catholic District School Board is building a community partnership to launch a Project SEARCH program in York Region in September 2022. The City of Vaughan has a unique opportunity to play a leadership role as a host site for Project SEARCH York Region.

Opportunity

- Collaborative model between school boards, businesses site hosts and community partners
- Pilot one-year* program geared towards total workplace immersion for students with disabilities with the goal of competitive employment for every program graduate
- Competitive Employment:
 - ✓ Permanent, non-seasonal
 - ✓ Paid minimum wage, or higher
 - ✓ 16 hours per week or more
 - ✓ Marketable and transferrable skills taught

*will span across two school years (2021-2023)

How it Works

EDUCATIONAL PARTNER:

- The school board provides a classroom teacher, curriculum and students are registered with the school board (typically in their final year of high school eligibility). Project SEARCH is a licensed program. The license fee will be paid by the school board.

BUSINESS PARTNER:

- A large organization with a strong track record of community involvement and employer excellence acts as the host business site. The business provides work-based learning (co-op) experiences, a “classroom” onsite, a business liaison and mentors within the departments

COMMUNITY AGENCY PARTNER:

- An employment support organization supports the students to transition to employment on completion of their training.

Roles and Responsibilities

YCDSB

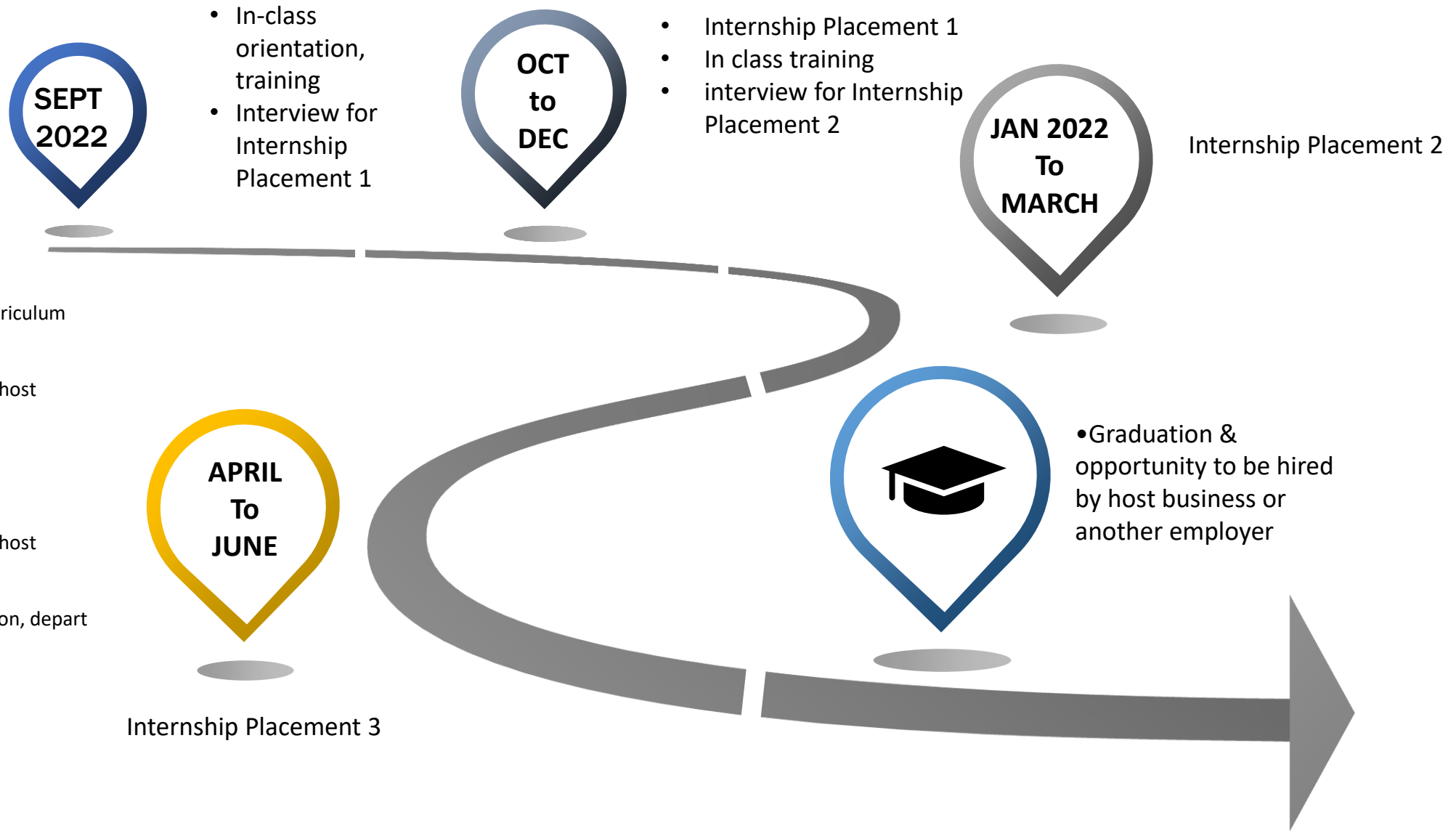
- Provides the Teacher to deliver the program
- Employer informed learning – students are taught specific job skills
- Provides Job Coaches

City of Vaughan

- Provides mentorship and business liaison
- Provides a classroom (in kind) in the workplace
- Provides 8–10 internship positions to offer students a variety of jobs and learn different skills
- No requirement to hire the participants

Community Partner

- Onsite job coach



➤ 6 Employment Planning Meetings During the Year

Timeline: School Year I (2021-22)

November & December 2021

- Exploratory discussions
- Determine business and community partners

January 2022: Partnership agreement

- Sign and pay license with Project SEARCH

February-August 2022: Preparations for start-up

- Develop plans and processes for implementation
- Parent information sessions
- Develop marketing materials for businesses and community partners
- Site visits and school visits in Toronto and Halton & business sites
- Conduct skills assessment day within YCDSB to determine student candidates
- Recruit first cohort of students (2022-23)
- Hire Teacher

September 2022: Implementation

