



Contact: Shari L. Berg
Communications Consultant
Mobile: 724-713-3254
Email: berg@ht-sd.org

HTSD Receives Grant to Launch CEO Program

The Hampton Township School District is pleased to announce it is the recipient of a Special Education Performance Grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The \$30,000 grant will be used to launch the Competitive Employment Options Program (CEO), which is designed to develop competence, confidence and connections to increase opportunities for careers and community participation for students receiving special education services.

Mrs. Sharon Smith, HTSD Special Education/Transition Coordinator, said the grant is the result of collaborative efforts between the District's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), High School and Middle School Administrators, Special Education Teachers and the Special Education Department. "It's about providing students with experiences so they can be successful after graduation," she said.

The CEO program has been developed to promote successful outcomes for students with disabilities to encourage early career planning, increased awareness of essential job skills and opportunities to work on these skills in a real-world setting.

"In today's job market, it is becoming more difficult for individuals to obtain and acquire the skills needed to compete in the 21st century job market," said Mrs. Smith. "By partnering with employers in our community, we will be helping students to better transition into the world of work and independence."

The program will provide students with the opportunity to:

- Job Shadowing – students will be able to spend part of a day with a worker in the workplace;
- Mentoring – students will have the opportunity to spend part of a day on a weekly basis with a worker in the workplace;
- Work-Based Opportunities – students will have the opportunity to be trained on the job site; and
- Community Job Site – students will be employed after school hours or on weekends at participating businesses to gain experience in the workplace;

The program is seeking the support of the North Hills Area Business Community to participate as partners in the CEO program. "We're gathering resources and planning activities to enable our students to make informed choices as they plan and prepare for their future," said Mrs. Smith.

Local business and industry also are encouraged to serve on an advisory committee for the CEO program. As members of the committee, they will provide information about their profession in the school setting; serve as an advisor for program development; and allow students to tour their businesses. Advisory committee members also may be asked to assist a class by serving as a guest speaker or assisting with job search skills such as resume writing, job search strategies and preparing for an interview.

"The CEO program benefits our students, as well as local businesses," said Mrs. Smith. "By participating in the program, businesses have the opportunity to assess the job performance of potential employees before hiring them, adding to their workforce and shaping the job skills of potential employees."

A parent training event will be held on Nov. 13 at Hampton Middle School that will include a session on the new CEO program.

Hampton Township School District works collaboratively with the community to support all children in becoming creative and innovative problem-solvers and communicators. The District maintains high expectations by furthering our Tradition of Excellence as our students develop the knowledge, character and integrity to impact the world.