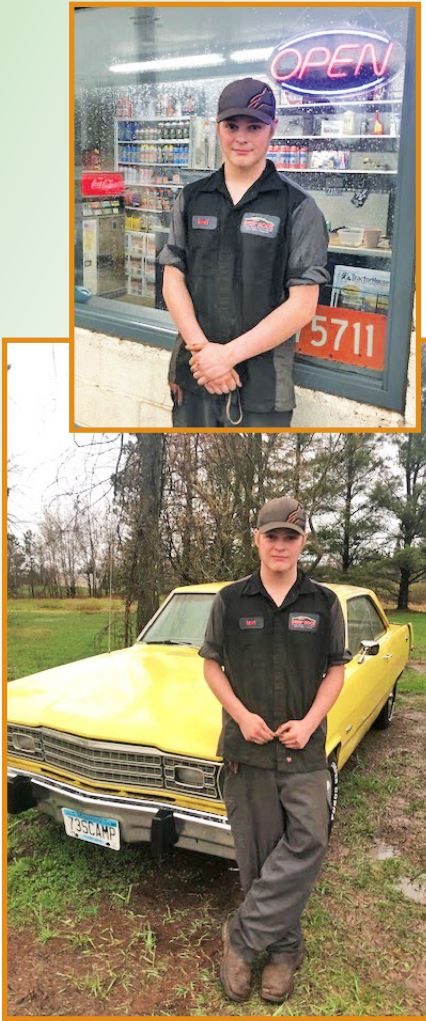


Work Based Learning Program Success:

Levi Leikam is currently an 11th grader at Willow River School. Levi is planning on becoming a diesel mechanic after graduation. This year has been a very successful school year for Levi. This is Levi's first year in the Work Based Learning program. Levi landed his own job at Deep Rock service station in Bruno as a service station attendant assistant. A traditional school schedule has not been a successful path for Levi in the past, but this year has been remarkable.

In addition to his work experience, Levi is also a teacher assistant in the Industrial Education classes at Willow River. He is quite the welder. In the 3rd quarter, Levi was on the honor roll! Levi said he is the first person ever in his family to ever be on the honor roll! **Congratulations Levi, keep up the good work and success on your career path!**



Presentations at NLIC Gatherings!

In keeping with NLIC's purpose, to provide eligible children with disabilities and their families with a coordinated, multi-disciplinary, interagency, intervention services system that is family centered and community based, each subcommittee rotates scheduling a presentation for NLIC meetings.

The following is a highlight of the presentations given through IC this year:

9/15/2021 Kenzie Friedman and Stephanie Uptown gave a presentation on the **Family Friendly Jail Initiative**.

This initiative came about because 67% of students in Carlton County said they had incarcerated parents. A survey was sent out to about 10,000 incarcerated parents and 100% of the mothers surveyed wanted some sort of parenting class. The family Friendly Jail Initiative allows for a more family friendly environment for children to visit their incarcerated parents. Only one child is allowed per visit about once per week for about 30 minutes. During these visits, devices are not allowed so the parents need to communicate with the child during the visit. After 3 visits the incarcerated parent gets a recordable book to give to each child and after 5 visits they receive a book about parenting from prison. These visits have helped motivate the incarcerated parents to be better parents to their children. When a inmate comes in they are given a survey that asks if they have any children, if they are pregnant, what school the children attend, are interested in parenting classes, do they live with the children, are they financially responsible for the children, do the children receive special education, how much time they spend with their children, and if there are other caregivers involved. Kenzie and Stephanie are working on having communication with schools once a parent is incarcerated as quickly as possible so the school will be aware of why a student might be having behavioral issues.

11/17/2021 Presentation: Heidi Diesterhaft, Northwoods Technical College; **Hospitality Foundations**

General Program Resources:

- Hospitality Foundations Website: www.northwoodtech.edu/academic-programs/degree-programs-and-certificates/hospitality-foundations
- Program Overview Video: youtu.be/Er2CEngrHCA
- Petition Informational Video: youtu.be/X_d8QkqQU48

- How to Petition: www.northwoodtech.edu/academic-programs/degree-programs-and-certificates/hospitality-foundations/requirements-and-application
- Petition Packet: www.northwoodtech.edu/sites/default/files/inline-files/HospitalityFoundationForms.pdf

1/19/2022 Presentation: Emily Rish, Community Navigator, Carlton County Community & Family Initiatives Department, **Discussion of Usage of Bridge to Benefits and Help Me Connect With Families**

- Emily Rish - emily.rish@co.carlton.mn.us
- Preschool development grant which is funded through the Northland Foundation
- helpmeconnect.web.health.state.mn.us/HelpMeConnect/
- www.bridgetobenefits.org/Home2
- northlandfdn.org/special-initiatives/community-resource-hub.php

3/16/2022 No presentation

NLIC
2022 Annual Report



- Parent Resource Booklet
- Secondary Transition Resource Booklet/Checklist and other documents can be found at: www.nlsec.org/parents

www.nlsec.org

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218-655-5018

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NLIC
2022 Annual Report

Interagency
Planning
For All



The Northern Lights Interagency Public Awareness Committee

The committee put together the Annual Report for the second consecutive year. It highlights the fantastic work in our region made possible by the partnerships with our schools, local sector, and agency partners. We also utilize social media to publicize the work of the Northern Lights Interagency Council.

This year we sent notes and window decals to every business partner that works with our work based learning coordinators and students who get the opportunity to gain work experience in their businesses. If you notice a "Proud Work-Based Learning Partner" window cling--thank these businesses!

Our interagency website has been updated. There you'll find previous annual reports, more information for parents, as well as agency links and videos.

Take a look at: www.nlsec.org/interagency

Northern Lights
Interagency Council
Quality education through
cooperation and partnership
16 East Hwy 61
Esko, MN 55733
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Northern Lights Interagency Council 2022 Annual Report



A Year of Highs and Lows

By Dena Hagen
Director of Special Education

I'm so proud of all of the special education staff that I work with as they are completing this 2021-22 school year. Everyone from teachers to paraprofessionals, administrators and office professionals have been through a lot of challenges the past 26 months and there have certainly been highs and lows.

In the "low" category, I think back to the struggle of schools throughout different pockets of this school year when there were spikes of COVID-19 illness. Many hailed January and February of this year to have been the most challenging months of all, when staff shortages were severe and schools contemplated daily whether or not they could sustain the "in-person model" of learning. This year has also been a year of "all hands on deck" and certainly exhausting for teachers, who covered each other's classes because there were (are) very few substitutes working anymore. Many principals were teaching classes as well and even the superintendents were driving bus and van routes to keep students in school. I'll use the word that's been spoken so often and many might be tired of it! It was unprecedented.

However, when I'm thinking back to the "highs", there are certainly some silver linings for all we've been through. Staff across our member districts have transformed some of their work into what I'm calling a "hybrid model" of meeting. A team or group can now gather completely virtual or some members can still attend in-person, while others join in through the screen from afar. This change is certainly allowing more flexibility for the Northern Lights cooperative staff, who travel across our 6,000 sq. mi. service area to serve. We can attend to more of the needs of our districts, whereas in the past, we wouldn't have been able to.

Fortunately, the emergency of the pandemic feels mostly behind us now and we continue to have extremely important work to do. Many, many students with disabilities were impacted by the interruption in typical learning over the past two years. Although kids are truly resilient, we're also continuing to see a rise in mental health needs and for those of us that work in special education, it's no secret that students learn in a variety of individualized ways. Now is the time to seize the opportunity to teach students differently and make an impact for the most success! Our important work of serving students with disabilities continues.

As I close, I want to reiterate that you can help your local school district! If you're at all interested in being a part of an awesome school team, I'll mention (again) that schools are experiencing a significant shortage of substitutes to work. Subs are extremely important members of schools! Contact your local district office or even our office and we'll get you connected with the right people.

NLSEC Parent Advisory Committee

Our Parent Advisory Committee is comprised of parents, county supports, school personnel and other agencies who support and represent our NLSEC member districts and work through the Northern Lights Interagency Council. We are a very active group that engages in activities each year to best support the children with disabilities with whom we work with and their families.

During our five yearly meetings, the Director of Special Education, Dena Hagen, provides the members with a variety of special education topics to discuss, updates the group on new legislation, teaches the group about components of Due Process and also provides other information that relates to families of children with disabilities. One special program that we have created and are proud of is our **Parent Coach program**. This is a group where parents of students with disabilities volunteer their time to support other parents new to special education. Information about the Parent Coach program is posted on the Northern Lights Special Education Cooperative website (NLSEC.org) for anyone interested in learning more about this opportunity or wanting to access this resource. We are always looking for new members!

If you are interested in joining our Parent Advisory Committee, please feel free to reach out to Dena Hagen for more information at 218-655-5018 ext. 7006.

Interagency Collaboration in Northeast Minnesota



Interagency Early Intervention Committee

Northern Lights Special Education Cooperative also participates in the Region 3 Interagency Early Intervention Committee (IEIC). The goal of IEIC is to increase awareness of infant and toddler early intervention and preschool special education referral procedures and service systems among educational, medical and support professionals working with families and their children with special needs (birth through five years old.)

We are directing our audience to Minnesota's online referral System: Help Me Grow through our state website www.helptmegrowmn.org. Our targeted audience to make referrals to Help Me Grow are parents, child care and early learning programs, school districts, public health, hospitals, physicians and health care providers, social service agencies, homeless shelters, domestic violence shelters and libraries. IEIC members are responsible to attend at least 4 meetings per year as well as communicate with their constituent groups the information provided at IEIC committee meetings. IEIC creates an annual work plan that outlines the outreach efforts for both subcommittees of IEIC-Child Find and Public Awareness. IEIC is funded through Federal dollars. Currently, our IEIC consists of members from the following counties: Carlton, St. Louis, Itasca, Kootchiching, Pine, Lake and Cook as well as all the school districts within Region 3.

Our outreach this year has been comprised of the following:

- Google Ads
- Television Ads
- Radio Ad
- Billboards
- Presentation at Northland Foundation Thrive Event
- Virtual Exhibit information at MACMA conference
- Slide at Northland Provider Appreciation Day
- Poster outreach
- Hospital outreach bags
- Presentations at Child Care Aware Events
- Digital sharing of Help Me Grow presentations
- Presentations at a variety of school events
- Local and individual presentations to our target audience



Work Based Learning Program Success:

WBL students from Barnum and Two Harbors High Schools made fleece blankets for Veterans at the Silver Bay Veterans Home as part of their work-based learning project. The students used electric scissors to cut the fleece. Some of the students used a wireless switch to activate the scissors.

On May 24, 2022, the students were able to deliver their completed blankets to the Silver Bay Veterans Home. Tears of joy and appreciation were shared. Nine blankets were made and American Legion Auxiliary Post 71 graciously donated three hundred dollars for the fleece to make the blankets. It was a collaborative effort between, American Legion Auxiliary, Tina Olson and Dee LeBlanc.



Nicholas Finifrock from Barnum High School making the blankets



Karl Madsen and Dane Olson from Two Harbors High School with Randall Walz from the Silver Bay Veterans Home

2021-22 NLIC Secondary Transition Subcommittee

ECBC (Employment Capacity Building Cohort)

- **NLSEC** along with representatives from Carlton, St. Louis and Lake Counties, and VRS have been participating in a cohort alongside MDE for the last two years. The group has been working on improving rates of competitive integrated employment for students with DCD, 18-21, improving transition programming, maintaining a statewide network of multi-agency partnerships, using online platforms and technology to increase participation among teams/agencies, and increasing team to team sharing of learning, approaches, resources and tools. The group has worked on utilizing more person centered forms to support IEP team members and centered around the student and their postsecondary goals.

- **Disability Hub** is a toll to support individuals and their families with solving problems, navigating the system and planning for their future in terms of health, benefits, work and housing.

- **My Vault** is a secure, personal account used by people with disabilities and those who support them to explore and plan, store and share files, create contact lists, and clearly document activities that lead to an informed choice. The hope is to have students and families create My Vault accounts prior to graduation in the coming years.

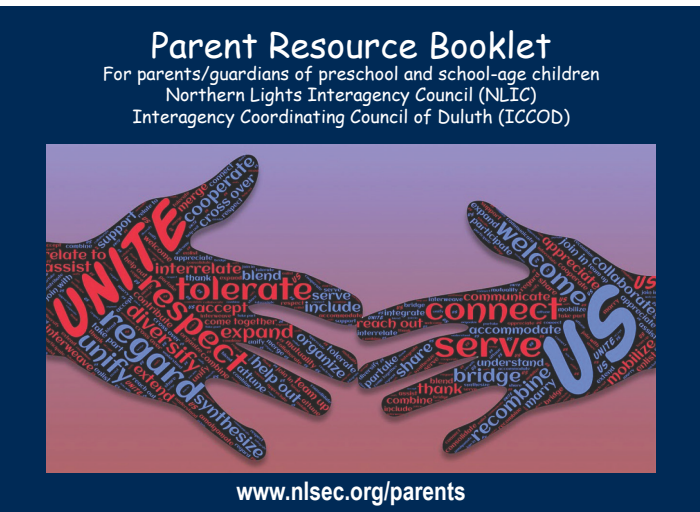
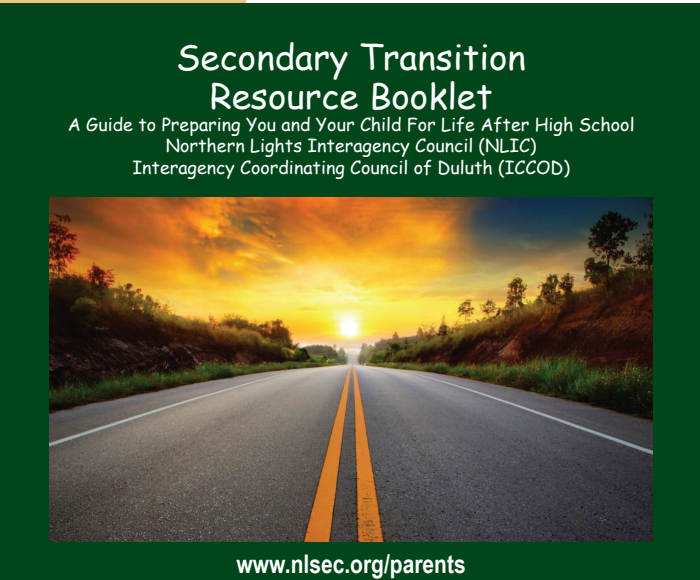
- **Secondary Transition Based IEP Meeting Agenda** is a tool to help the high school IEP team focus on the student's vision for employment, postsecondary education and training and independent living. From the student and families vision/goals the team develops a plan to assist the student in meeting their goals.

Northwoods Technical College–Hospitality Foundation Program

Northwoods Technical College, formerly WITC, has started a short term technical diploma program. It is designed for students with intellectual disabilities or other obstacles that may hinder the transition into skilled training programs. It is a 16 week program that prepares them for career opportunities in the area of entry level hospitality and customer service. The training is completely interactive and community based. Check it out!!

Secondary Transition Booklet

A small workgroup has been revising the Secondary Transition Booklet. This booklet assists students, families and educators with learning about the process for planning for life after high school and connecting with various local, regional and state agencies for support now and into adulthood.



Parent Resources

Comprehensive resources are available to parents, one for parents of preschool and school age children; and another for parents of children transitioning out of high school into the “real world”. Hard copies are available upon request or online at:

www.nlsec.org/parents

Parent Resource Booklet

This publication is for parents and guardians of preschool and school-age children. The purpose of this book is to provide a comprehensive resource and local directory with information regarding:

- Special education (overview and referral information)
- County based services
- Behavioral/mental health resources
- Community based resources
- Advocacy
- Early Hearing Detection and Intervention
- Preschool age resources
- Disability specific resources
- Assistive Technology
- Child development resources
- Web based resources

Secondary Transition Resource Booklet

Transitioning out of high school into the “real world” can be a very stressful and emotional time for both students and families. There is a lot of information to be aware of when planning for life after high school. This booklet was organized to assist families, students, and educators with the necessary information for community resources and transitional information within St. Louis, Carlton, Lake, Pine and Aitkin counties.

Hard copies available upon request or print a digital copy at:
www.nlsec.org/parents



Agency Resources

Robert F. Pierce Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic

156 Chester Park Hall, 31 West College St, Duluth, MN

• 218-726-8199

Located in the Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders on the University of Minnesota Duluth campus, the Robert F. Pierce Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic offers comprehensive assessment, diagnosis, and therapy services to individuals with communication disorders and differences.

Udac

www.udac.org



Northway Academy

1301 Miller Trunk Hwy, Ste 500, Duluth, MN • 218-481-7290

Northway Academy provides Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) day programs across Minnesota for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or related conditions. We believe that all children deserve the opportunity to grow and thrive in the community they call home. Each individual with ASD possesses unique strengths and areas requiring supports. Northway Academy's services are personalized to meet the unique needs of each child.

Essentia Health ASD

Parent support group in partnership with the MN Masonic Children's clinic in Duluth. We meet the 1st Wednesday of each month from 5-6 pm at the Masonic Clinic, 24 W 2nd St, Duluth.

Trillium Works, Inc.

Duluth: 4629 Airpark Blvd. Duluth, MN • 218-722-5009

www.trilliumworksinfo.com

Trillium Works, Inc. is a licensed employment services and community-based day supports provider. We provide support for individuals who are seeking competitive employment including assistance learning job skills and maintaining employment in the community. We also provide individualized, community-based training and support services that help a person develop and maintain essential and personally enriching life skills. Trillium Works! is a leader in person-centered service delivery and can work with all individuals that qualify for a waiver through their counties including the Developmental Disability (DD), Community Access for Disability Inclusion (CADI) or Brain Injury (BI) Waivers. We also do extensive work for individuals who are working with Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) and State Services for the Blind (SSB).

