

Partners with Business: Sophie at Yahara River Learning Center

Sophie’s dreams are to work with young children just like her mom, get a driver’s license and a car, and move into her own apartment. To pursue these dreams, she started volunteering at a day care in Sun Prairie to build skills with supports from DeForest high school and she attended Madison College to complete three of the six credits needed to earn a child care certificate. According to Sophie’s Transition Coordinator, “Sophie is amazing with kids. She is very comfortable and natural with them.” So, it is no surprise Sophie was hired in July 2017 to work full-time as a teaching assistant at Yahara River Learning Center in DeForest.

To set Sophie up for success, the Transition Coordinator negotiated *Partners with Business Plus* supports with the Yahara River Learning Center. Sophie was paired with a lead teacher, Katie, to work in the two-year-old room. Katie and Sophie work in tandem like any lead and assistant teacher would, however, Katie goes above and beyond that typical role to mentor Sophie toward becoming a lead teacher, as well as guide her on soft-skill development, help her problem solve, and help her navigate social and emotional situations at work. Katie is also going to be Sophie’s tutor while she completes the second class for her child care license. This kind of support is invaluable for Sophie’s efforts to achieve her goal of becoming a lead teacher in the future. It is also far less stigmatizing and much less expense than having a job coach from the school or a vocational service agency with her at work. Another benefit: the childcare center directors don’t have the extra worry of unfamiliar job coaches coming into the center to support Sophie at work.

Traditional Agency or School Supports		Partners with Business <i>Plus</i>	
Number of job coaching hours per week (4x1 hr + 30 minutes for transportation per visit)	6 hours	Co-worker paid supports needed per week	4 hours
Cost for job coach per hour	\$15 per hour plus benefits	Cost for employer to provide co-worker supports	\$15 per hour
Total weekly costs for job support	\$ 90 per week plus benefits	Total weekly reimbursement to employer for co-worker supports ¹	\$60 per week
Total annual support costs (37 weeks of employment) *	\$3,330 + benefits	Total annual support costs (37 weeks of employment) *	\$2,220

Savings to the Public System with Partners with Business *Plus* = over \$1100 per year

¹ School funds are used to provide the reimbursement to the employer