

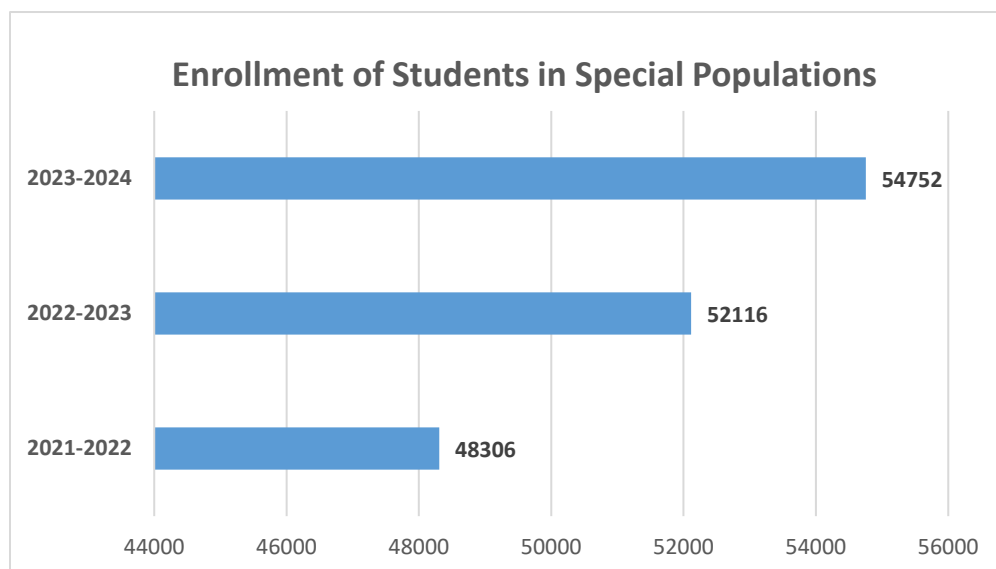
Winter 2025

The goal of Equity and Special Populations Newsletter is to provide information that will be useful to the Career and Technical Education (CTE) community to support ALL students, but particularly, students within special populations.

Happy New Year!
Enjoy reading this issue of the Equity and Special Populations Newsletter.
Valerie Milton

PROGRESS OF STUDENTS IN SPECIAL POPULATIONS IN SECONDARY CTE PROGRAMS

There was an increase in students in special populations enrolled in CTE programs. Between 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, enrollment increased by approximately 2,000 students. Between 2021-2024, there was a 13% increase in enrollment of students in special populations. The [MI CTE Dashboards](#) have more information on the performance of students in special populations.



INSPIRING STORIES

Colton Morris – 2024 Graduate from Traverse City West Senior High School, Auto Repair Program, Northwest Education Services Career Tech

Submitted by: Jana Miseta, Teacher Consultant, Kevin Kimble, Auto Instructor, Mike Williams, Auto Repair Paraprofessional, and Kelly Hawkins, ELA Teacher



Colton Morris graduated from Traverse City West Senior High School in May 2024. He completed two years in the North Ed Auto Repair Program. Throughout high school, Colton had an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) and faced challenges with reading and writing. He relied heavily on technology tools, such as Snap & Read and Co-Writer, to have information read aloud and to assist with his writing. Despite his difficulties, Colton always maintained a positive attitude, even when faced with technological barriers that hindered his access to the curriculum. He greatly advocates for himself and others, treating his peers respectfully and kindly. Colton was also the first person to offer to help in the classroom. Colton made outstanding growth in his work ethic, eagerness to learn, and professionalism. Colton is an example for others who have reading and writing challenges. He shows that no matter what the barrier, you can succeed with determination. He earned ASE Entry-Level Certifications in Brakes, Engine Performance, and Maintenance and Light Repair. Colton shared that he “attributes success at Career Tech to the support of teachers and staff.” He plans to attend the Michigan Career Technical Institute (MCTI) Automotive Technology program.

Congratulations Colton!

AMA ESD Partners with Former Student Nick Brousseau, to Expand Program

Submitted by: Lorell Whitscell, Post Secondary Planning Assistant, Lisa Siegert, Post Secondary Planning Assistant

Life has a way of coming full circle, as demonstrated by local entrepreneur Nick Brousseau. After spending two years at Pied Piper School's center-based transition program, Nick graduated in 2015, having gained valuable Work-Based Learning (WBL) experience at various local businesses, including Culvers, Alpena Community College's Lumberjack Shack, and Walmart. Following his graduation, Nick launched his own business, Nick's Shout Outs, specializing in personalized stickers, decals, mugs, hoodies, t-shirts, and hats. Recently, the Alpena Montmorency Alcona Educational Service District (AMA ESD) transition team sought to enhance WBL opportunities for students with disabilities and show appreciation to local businesses that have played a vital role in fostering employability skills for students. To recognize these businesses, the AMA ESD transition team commissioned a custom sticker design. In a serendipitous turn of events, a team member who had previously worked with Nick during his high school years reconnected with him, leading to an exciting collaboration. Nick was tasked with producing 25 stickers for presentation at the end of the school year, with plans for future orders to follow. Nick Brousseau presented one of his stickers to Justin Gluesing, the Superintendent of AMA ESD. These stickers will be displayed at various WBL sites throughout the Alpena area, celebrating the commitment of local businesses to support youth development and employability skills. Lisa Siegert, a member of the AMA ESD transition team, remarked, "Our partnerships with local businesses are crucial in preparing our students for the workforce. They provide invaluable hands-on experience that helps bridge the gap between education and employment." Lorell Whitscell, also from the transition team, added, "We are proud to collaborate with entrepreneurs like Nick, who exemplifies the success that can come from these partnerships. Their support not only benefits our students but also strengthens our community as a whole." This collaboration underscores the importance of community partnerships in supporting the next generation of workers. Congratulations, Nick, on your incredible success as an entrepreneur!



Pictured from left to right: Lorell Whitscell (AMA ESD Post Secondary Planning Asst), Nick Brousseau (Nick's Shout Out, Owner/Operator), Justin Gluesing (AMA ESD Superintendent), and Lisa Siegert (AMA ESD Post Secondary Planning Asst.)



These stickers will be displayed at Work-Based Learning sites throughout the Alpena area, signifying the business' commitment to supporting our exceptional youth.

Building Connections at Lansing Community College's (LCC's) Silver Bells Watch Party

**Submitted by: Sophia Estrada-Ferreira, Perkins Special Populations Coordinator
Student Affairs, Lansing Community College**

On November 22, 2024, Lansing Community College's Special Populations team (Perkins Special Populations Coordinator and Adult Resource Center Support Specialist) hosted a special gathering for Perkins's students with children during the annual *Silver Bells in the City* Watch Party. This beloved event, where LCC participates every year, served as the perfect launching point for an initiative designed to create a sense of community among students who benefit from our services.

The team reserved tables for students and their families, providing "connection sheets" to inspire conversations, share experiences, and build supportive relationships. This effort was born from a recognition that many students are looking for ways to connect with peers who understand their unique challenges.

The event not only celebrated the holiday season but also aligned with Lansing Community College's mission of fostering an environment where all students feel valued and know they belong. This marks the first step in a series of planned events aimed at bringing Special Populations students together.

RESOURCES

Unlocking Career Success for Students in Special Populations

The Unlocking Career Success toolkit, [Series of Playbooks to Support Students and Families](#), provides information to support students in high school, postsecondary education, and/or the workforce. Students and Families, Adult Learners, English Learners, Highly Mobile Youth, Individuals with Disabilities, and Military Connected Youth.

Using AI to Support Students

[Diffit for Teachers](#) – creates differentiated curriculum and instructional materials to meet students where they are in their learning.

[Magic School](#) – creates differentiated lesson plans to support a variety of student learners at different academic levels.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2025 Michigan Occupational Special Populations Association (MOSPA) Conference

MOSPA will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary at the 2025 MOSPA Conference! The theme is Celebrating 50 YEARS OF CTE IMPACT: Michigan's Legacy of Transforming Special Populations. The Conference will be held April 30 – May 2, 2025, at Boyne Mountain Resort. Additional details will be shared soon on the MOSPA [website](#). Presentation proposals are now being accepted. Please submit proposals here: [MOSPA 2025 Presenter Interest Form](#).

If you have information that would be beneficial to others, please contact:

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