

2023-2024  
School Accountability Report Card  
**Urban Skills Center**  
A school of *The Institute for Effective Education*

I. General Information

**Contact Information:**

School Name: Urban Skills Center  
School Director: Jen Swope, M.S.  
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**School Description**

Urban Skills Center (USC) is a non-public school operated by The Institute for Effective Education (TIEE), and is certified by the California Department of Education. Urban Skills Center, a special education transition program for students ages 18-22, strives to help young adults achieve their maximum potential as members of the community by developing vocational and independent living skills, in addition to completing their high school education. In order to help students make the transition to adult life, we endeavor to create an environment that simulates employment and independent living, and fosters personal growth and responsibility.

Urban Skills Center occupies a single floor in a business park across a driveway from another TIEE school, COOK Education Center. There are multiple classrooms which allows for flexible instructional groups ranging from 1:1 to large group activities. Urban Skills Center staff and students use the facilities at COOK Education Center (e.g., student kitchen, dojo, fitness rooms) as needed for student programming. Numerous computers and tablets are available for student use for academic work, recreational use, and for developing their digital portfolios. TIEE provides the school with vehicles for transportation for off-campus outings and vocational training opportunities.

**Mission Statement**

*The Institute for Effective Education (TIEE) is dedicated to education that is unparalleled in scope of curriculum, effectiveness of instruction, and pervasiveness of positive ambience. To achieve this goal, TIEE is committed to using the principles, methods, and facts established by behavioral science research of the highest standard in order to educate individuals, whose talents span the full spectrum of ability.*

**Health, Safety, and Welfare**

Health, safety, and welfare of TIEE's students, staff, and visitors is of paramount concern. TIEE provides a janitorial/custodial staff to maintain cleanliness and good repair of its facilities, and budgets funds adequate to provide for the day-to-day maintenance and the repair or replacement of worn out or broken equipment.

TIEE has a comprehensive program of Health, Welfare, and Safety practices that involve written policies and procedures that are updated based on actual TIEE incidents, on insurance carrier requirements, and on information concerning safe practices in schools.

TIEE and School Administrators provide staff members with initial and ongoing training; information dissemination to students, parents, and staff members; site visitations by loss-control experts; a pro-active Safety Committee that meets monthly to review safety practices, to identify hazards, and to perform site evaluations; hazard reporting procedures; follow-up of incidents involving harm or potential harm to students and/or staff members; and budgeted funds for the repair or replacement of facilities or equipment that is deemed hazardous. The principal items for which safe practices have been identified in TIEE's Health, Welfare, and Safety policies and procedures are the following: Floors, walkways, play surfaces and their coverings; Stairs and ladders; Tools and equipment; Electrical power, power cords, and outlets; Kitchen appliances and equipment; Broken or malfunctioning tools and equipment; Heavy objects; Chemicals and chemical spills; Hazardous particulates; Cleaning and maintenance; Infestations, infections, and illnesses; Visitors and intruders; Miscellaneous student activities; Miscellaneous personnel activities; Immunizations; Medication administration as school; Severe problem behavior; "Safe response" as emergency intervention for severe problem behavior; Child abuse reporting; Release of students; Off-campus travel; Operating vehicles; Fire safety; Earthquake safety; Sexual harassment; Blood-borne pathogens; Emergency medical care; and Safe practices concerning the transmission of COVID-19.

### **Opportunities for Parent Involvement**

Opportunities for parent involvement in the school are numerous, including any or all of the following: IEP process, classroom observations and/or video views, participation in seasonal and special events, annual teacher-parent meetings, student performances, telephone contact, website, newsletters, and financial support for certain extra-curricular functions.

## **II. Student Demographic Information**

Urban Skills Center serves students ages 18-22, with a variety of mild to severe disabilities. All current students at USC are considered 12th and/or 12+ grade students. School is in session for 210 days each year (180 traditional school days, 30 extended school year (ESY) days).

*Student Enrollment*

	Oct. 1, 2021	Oct. 1, 2022	Oct. 1, 2023
Total # enrolled	22	17	19

*Ethnicity or nationality*

	Oct. 1, 2021	Oct. 1, 2022	Oct. 1, 2023
Asian	0%	0%	0%
Black/African American	18%	18%	26%
Hispanic/Latino	18%	12%	11%
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	5%	0%	0%
White, not of Hispanic Origin	59%	70%	63%

*Gender*

	Oct. 1, 2021	Oct. 1, 2022	Oct. 1, 2023
Female	23%	29%	21%
Male	77%	71%	79%

*Age/Grade\* Distribution*

	Oct. 1, 2021	Oct. 1, 2022	Oct. 1, 2023
18 years old	9%	29%	21%
19 years old	32%	24%	21%
20 years old	5%	35%	26%
21 years old	54%	12%	32%

\*Grade distribution: students 18 to 22 years of age are all considered 12th or 12+ grade.

*Primary educational disability category*

	Oct. 1, 2021	Oct. 1, 2022	Oct. 1, 2023
Intellectual Disability	9%	12%	16%

Autism	73%	70%	79%
Other Health Impaired	9%	12%	0%
Emotional Disturbance	4.5%	0%	0%
Multiple Disability	4.5%	6%	5%

### III. Instructional Staff and Professional Development

#### **Staff members**

The direct-service teaching staff at Urban Skills Center is made up of credentialed teachers, licensed related-service providers, and paraprofessional teaching staff members. Teachers must hold a preliminary or clear California Education Specialist Mild/Moderate and/or Moderate/Severe teaching credential. Intern teachers are required to hold an intern credential, and must be currently enrolled in a teacher preparation/credential program. Pre-interns are required to hold a substitute teaching credential, and must be enrolled in a teacher preparation/credential program. Paraprofessional teachers must have a minimum of a high-school diploma. In addition to the teaching staff, Urban Skills Center has a Program Coordinator, a credentialed teacher who supervises the teaching staff and monitors student programming and progress. The Program Coordinator reports to the School Director through regular supervision meetings as well as during regular leadership team meetings.

#### **Professional Development**

Continuous staff training and development is a priority at Urban Skills Center. Many professional development opportunities are provided to staff members each year. Training and development opportunities include online trainings and webinars; on-site training and coaching; and attendance at professional conferences and workshops.

In addition to workshops, trainings, and conferences, staff members are constantly coached and given feedback on their daily performance. Coaching sessions are done during class time as well as via video. Staff members' performance is evaluated regularly through the use of instructional observations and performance appraisals.

All teaching staff members are evaluated on standards of performance (e.g., attendance, dress code, timeliness), fundamentals of instruction, organization and materials management, team meeting participation, response to supervision, behavior management strategies, and data collection. Professional staff members are also evaluated on IEP program development and Behavior Intervention Plans as well as coaching and supervision skills. Short-term (month to month) and long-term goals are developed for each staff member. Staff members are expected to utilize effective instructional strategies with all students. Examples of such strategies include antecedent management (e.g., small group instruction, task-presentation at an appropriate instructional level for each learner), consequence management (e.g.,

extinction procedures, high rates of praise and payoffs for desirable behavior), and teaching appropriate skills (e.g., school-wide procedures).

#### IV. Academics and Curricular Focus

Urban Skills Center provides a range of courses appropriate to the grade and present levels of our students and align with the target areas of transition planning, including post-secondary education & training, employment, and independent living. Classes include functional and applied academics, fine and practical arts, social skills instruction, daily living skills, health sciences and self-care, self-determination, and leisure and recreation. All coursework is aligned with Common Core State Standards, and meets the standards set forth by each student's district of residence. In the 2023-2024 school year, all of the students were earning credits towards a certificate of completion from their district of residence.

Regardless of program focus, students are exited from Urban Skills Center at age 22, with a graduation date of December 31 or June 30, depending on their date of birth. All students participate in vocational education training and have an Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) as part of their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Post-secondary transition preparation activities include on-site vocational training classes, off-site vocational apprenticeships, mobility training, and community-based instruction. These activities are done in conjunction with the rest of the student's IEP goals.

Related Services: Many students at Urban Skills Center require additional supports and services in order to achieve educational benefit and access curriculum. Speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, and school counselors provide these related services in collaboration with teachers in individual and group therapy sessions, as well as during push-in and co-teaching opportunities in the classroom. These specialists also provide training and coaching to the direct-service teaching staff so the strategies can be implemented across activities, allowing for generalization and maintenance of skills.

#### V. Transition Services and Post-Secondary Preparation

##### **Vocational Education**

Vocational education is an important component of the curriculum for all Urban Skills Center students. One of the goals of the Urban Skills Center program is to see that every student graduates with a transition plan that includes competitive integrated employment. While some students may continue to need varying levels of support post graduation, every student has the capacity to be a productive member of his/her community. Towards that end, Urban Skills Center strives to develop generalized

employment skills in all students, while at the same time developing specific skill sets in employable areas of interest identified by the student.

### **Employment Skills**

Generalized employment skills are defined as non-job specific skills that are valued by almost all employers, for example, arriving to work on time, dressing appropriately for the job, completing assigned tasks, etc. The generalized employment skills taught at Urban Skills Center address four major areas: Following established employer policies; Completing assigned work; Working with others; & Getting a job.

Urban Skills Center offers apprenticeships at different levels of support, starting with on-campus group apprenticeships (providing the most teacher support), all the way through the continuum to direct-hire positions with an employer.

### **Transition Services**

Preparing students for life after graduation is a critical component of Urban Skills Center. All students at Urban Skills Center participate in weekly classes to learn all aspects of their post-school activities (e.g., continuing education, leisure and recreation, employment, independent living, etc.). The emphasis at Urban Skills Center is on teaching students to recognize their strengths and limitations and then advocate for appropriate accommodations across the various environments and activities in their lives.