



**Portage Lakes | Career Center**

# **Special Services Handbook 2024/2025**

*Communication & Procedures for Serving Students with Disabilities*

**EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCES.**

**EVERY STUDENT. EVERY DAY.**

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Portage Lakes Career Center Special & Student Services Contact Information.....	4
Partner Schools Special & Student Services Contact Information.....	4-5
Program Promotion & Accessibility.....	6
Application & Enrollment Procedures.....	6-7
Student Withdrawal.....	7
Career Assessment.....	7
Special Education Services	
Transition of Students from Associate School to Career Center.....	8
Transfer of Special Education Information.....	8
Special Education for Current Portage Lakes Career Center Students.....	8
Alternative Placements.....	8
Internal Monitoring Process.....	8-9
Related Services & Supplementary Supports.....	9
Academic Offerings.....	9
Progress Monitoring.....	9
Parent/Guardian Involvement.....	9
Determining Eligibility for Special Education Services.....	9
504 Plan and Evaluation Procedures.....	10
Communication & Planning with Associate Schools.....	10
Discipline Procedures & Behavior.....	10
Exam Accommodations.....	10
Enrollment of Multi-Year Grads and Planned Continuation of Ed Services.....	11
Appendix A: Internal Monitoring Checklist.....	12

## **Introduction**

### **Portage Lakes Career Center**

#### Our Vision

- Extraordinary Experiences. Every Student. Every Day.

#### Our Mission

- We equip and empower tomorrow's leaders to discover their passion and design their future.

#### We Believe

- An innovative culture positions our students to navigate an evolving global economy.
- Success demands a safe environment, where individuals are respected and valued.
- Experiences beyond the classroom walls enrich learning and maximize student growth.
- Learning, teaching, designing, and leading is a shared responsibility.

#### Partner Schools

- Coventry
- Green
- Manchester
- Springfield

In collaboration with our partner schools, PLCC is committed to providing high-quality services and offers various educational options for students with special needs. General and special education services are provided for students with an Individualized Education Plan or a 504 Plan. Services provided to students enrolled in a satellite program are provided in conjunction with PLCC's satellite instructors and the partner school.

#### Available services at Portage Lakes Career Center

- Co-Taught General Education Academic Classes- A general education teacher as well as an intervention specialist co-plan and co-teach subject matter to an inclusive group of students.
- General Education Academic Classes- A general education teacher plans and instructs the subject matter to an inclusive group of students.
- Resource Academic Classes- An intervention specialist plans and instructs modified subject matter to a group of students who have disabilities. These courses are only offered as schedule requests warrant and are not guaranteed to be available. These courses are typically only offered during the junior year and only in the subject areas of English and Math.
- Intervention & Enrichment classes for students with an IEP or 504 plan, when appropriate. Students receive specialized instruction and additional support during this time.
- Career Technical Education programs are taught by general educators with the support of an intervention specialist as available.

**Portage Lakes Career Center Special & Student Services Contact Information**

Name	Position	Email	Phone
<b>Special Services</b>			
Gregg Clark	Principal	gclark@plcc.edu	330-896-8224
Tina Saley	Assistant Principal	csaley@plcc.edu	330-896-8273
Nikki Weigand	Intervention Specialist	nweigand@plcc.edu	330-896-8270
Jason Magda	Intervention Specialist	jmagda@plcc.edu	330-896-8119
<b>Student Services</b>			
Ilario Cursaro	School Counselor	icursaro@plcc.edu	330-896-8250
Allyson Himmelright	School Counselor	ahimmelright@plcc.edu	330-896-8243
Brandie Kresowaty	Student Services Secretary	bkresowaty@plcc.edu	330-896-8276

**Partner Schools Special & Student Services Contact Information**

School	Name	Position	Email Address	Phone Number
Coventry	Melissa Dort	Special Services Director	mdort@coventryschools.org	330 644-0699
Coventry	Sarah England	School Psychologist	sengland@coventryschools.org	330-644-3004 x624023
Coventry	Toni Johnson	Special Education Assistant	tjohnson@coventryschools.org	330-644-2232
Coventry	Michelle Berentz	School Counselor	mberentz@coventryschools.org	330-644-3004 x624019
Coventry	Jennifer Horner	School Counselor	jhorner@coventryschools.org	330-644-3004 x624020
Green	Joya Mitchell	Director of Student Services	mitchelljoya@greenlocalschools.org	330 896-7575 x617538
Green	Liz Rebadow	Special Education Coach	rebadowliz@greenlocalschools.org	330 896-7474 x618787
Green	Jessica Angeloni	Administrative Assistant	angelonijessica@greenlocalschools.org	330 896-7577
Green	Susan Taylor Witmer	School Psychologist	taylorwitmersusan@greenlocalschools.org	(330) 896-6082
Green	Lindsey Szymanski	Special Education Coordinator	szymanski lindsey@greenlocalschools.org	330-896-7575
Green	Kevin Granito	School Counselor	granitokevin@greenlocalschools.org	330 896-7575

				x617536
Green	Mandy Gamble	School Counselor	gambleamanda@greenlocalschools.org	330 896-7575 x617515
Green	Marilyn Ruff	Department Chair & School Counselor	ruffmarilyn@greenlocalschools.org	330 896-7575 x617755
Green	Kory Smith	School Counselor	smithkory@greenlocalschools.org	330 896-7575 x617578
Joanna	Yokum	Special Education Coordinator	yokum.joanna@manchester-panthers.org	330-882-4133 x563011
Manchester	Morgan Thomas	School Psychologist	Morgan.thomas@manchester-panthers.org	330-882-3291 x561007
Manchester	Jessica Eitner	School Counselor (Last Names A-K)	jessica.eitner@manchester-panthers.org	330-882-3291 x561005
Manchester	Joe Pukansky	School Counselor (Last Names L-Z)	joseph.pukansky@manchester-panthers.org	330-882-3291 x561005
Springfield	Christina Ziga-Budd	Special Services Director	sp_ziga-budd@springfieldspartans.org	330-798-1111 x545013
Springfield	Michelle Cymbor	Special Services Secretary	sp_cymbor@springfieldspartans.org	330-798-1111 x545014
Springfield	April Frohwerk	School Psychologist	sp_frohwerk@springfieldspartans.org	330-798-1002 x545208
Springfield	Shelby VanGunten	School Counselor	sp_vangunten@springfieldspartans.org	330-798-1002 x545298
Springfield	Melinda Weakland	School Counselor	sp_weakland@springfieldspartans.org	330-798-1002 x545221
Springfield	Donna Duffield	Student Services Secretary	sp_duffield@springfieldspartans.org	330-798-1002 x545220

## **Program Promotion & Accessibility**

Portage Lakes Career Center provides multiple opportunities for students within our partner school districts to learn about our services. These events provide opportunities for all students to learn about programs offered at Portage Lakes Career Center. These events showcase options that students have in career technical education, provide information about the types of jobs associated with these programs, and demonstrate the skills needed to be successful in these career fields.

### **Recruitment & events sponsored by Portage Lakes Career Center:**

**8th grade visitation-** 8th grade students are provided the opportunity to attend a field trip to Portage Lakes Career Center. Students attending will have the opportunity to learn about each of the programs. Information provided during the visit informs students of career options and skills needed.

**10th grade visitation-** 10th grade students at the partner schools are provided the opportunity to attend a field trip to Portage Lakes Career Center where they can visit programs of their choosing.

**10th grade presentation-** Current Portage Lakes Career Center School Counselors visit each of the partner schools to present to 10th grade students. Students may ask questions about the programs and learn about the opportunities available within their chosen field.

**Career Exploration Evening-** All students from the partner schools are invited to bring their parents and guardians to this open house evening event. Career technical and academic instructors are present to answer student and parent questions. Special service staff members are available to meet with parents to answer questions regarding services at Portage Lakes Career Center. Enrollment staff are also available to assist students and parents with application procedures.

**Portage Lakes Career Center Catalog-** The Portage Lakes Career Center Catalog is mailed to the homes of all current 10th grade students in the partner districts. Students and families also receive an invitation to the Career Exploration evening at that time.

**Career Tech Tuesdays-** These Tuesday events provide students an opportunity to explore programs of their choice in depth at PLCC. Students may ride the shuttle bus from their partner school to PLCC in the morning, and return to the associate school on the midday bus. Students can arrange to attend a Career Tech Tuesday through their school counselors.

**New Student Orientation-** This evening event is designed for students who have applied and been accepted to a specific program. Students and families can meet with instructors, simulate their day with their class schedule, and locate their lockers in the building. It is an opportunity to help students and parents with the transition to PLCC.

## **Application & Enrollment Procedures**

### **PORTAGE LAKES CAREER CENTER ENROLLMENT SYSTEM**

- A. Each year a school's quota will be based on the student enrollment in the tenth grade as submitted on the district's fall report.
- B. All students considering enrollment must be sixteen (16) years of age by October 1<sup>st</sup> of the year of enrollment and have completed two (2) years of high school.
- C. Each participating school will be allotted at least one (1) student in each program at the Career Center.
- D. When calculating a school's percentage for student enrollment, any fractional part of a percent will be rounded off.
- E. When computing the number of student openings for each school year, any fractional part of an opening will be rounded off.

- F. In oversubscribed programs, students will be selected via a lottery system in districts exceeding their quota.
- G. After December 13th, students who apply for an unfilled opening will be accepted on a first-come, first serve basis from qualified applicants.
- H. Students who apply for full time status may not be more than four (4) semesters deficient. Returning seniors must not have more than two (2) semester deficiencies.
- I. Seniors will not be accepted into a junior program. The exception will be on a case by case basis for a student who is approved by the PLCC Special Services department.
- J. All CTE programs must be completed in two consecutive years.
- K. After March 25th, students outside the Career Technical Planning District (CTPD) may be considered for acceptance into a program as a “lab only” student.
- L. Students who maintain “Out of Jointure” enrollment status must provide copies of a birth certificate, immunization records, and develop a two-year plan for graduation with Career Center guidance staff prior to official acceptance to the Career Center.
- M. Once students and families have been notified of their acceptance to a program, partner district School Counselors will be asked to indicate whether a student has an IEP/504 plan, so that Portage Lakes Career Center can initiate the collection of documents and data.

### **Student Withdrawal**

The Board of Education directs that whenever a student enrolled through a participating local district wishes to withdraw, effort should be made to determine the underlying reason for such action and the resources of the District should be used to assist the student in reaching his/her career goals. No student under the age of eighteen (18) will be permitted to withdraw without the consent of a parent or guardian.

By agreement with the participating local districts, no student who enrolls in a career technical education program may withdraw or change enrollment status (full day/ half day) during the first five (5) days of the program. No student shall be able to make any change to their schedule or enrollment status after ten (10) days. No student shall be able to return after withdrawing from the program.

When a student transfers out of the District, the student’s name will be removed from the class list and the instructors and counselors will complete his/her records and cause them to be sent to the participating schools Custodian of Records. For a transferring special education or 504 student, the Assistant Principal shall also be notified of the transfer, date of transfer and receiving school or agency.

In accordance with Board Policy (Removal, Suspension, Expulsion, and Permanent Exclusion of Students), the Superintendent shall initiate expulsion proceedings against a student who has committed an act that warrants expulsion under Board policy even if the student withdraws from school prior to the hearing or decision to impose expulsion. Any resulting expulsion shall be imposed for the same duration it would have been had the student remained.

### **Career Assessment**

Opportunities to administer CareerScope career assessments will be provided to the partner districts. These assessments should be made available to all students to help guide their career and transition choices. The partner school will be responsible for coordinating the administration of the assessments.

Portage Lakes Career Center encourages our partner schools to invite a representative to attend educational meetings for students in any grade where the student has been assessed, or Portage Lakes Career Center is being considered as an option.

## **Special Education Services**

### **Transition of Students from Associate School to Career Center**

Upon acceptance to Portage Lakes Career Center and the student planning to attend full day, the partner school is encouraged to conduct a transition IEP meeting where a PLCC staff member is in attendance. At this meeting, the IEP can be reviewed by Portage Lakes Career Center staff, partner school staff, students and families, to ensure a smooth transition of services.

### **Transfer of Special Education Information**

Upon acceptance to a program at Portage Lakes Career Center, the partner school must identify a child as having an IEP or 504 and provide that information to Portage Lakes Career Center. When a student has been formally accepted and placed in a program, the partner district must provide either hard or electronic copies of the student's IEPs, ETRs, FBAs, BIPs, 504 plans, and 504 evaluations to PLCC staff. The partner district must collaborate with PLCC staff to ensure proper placements are made in regard to programs as well as academic offerings. PLCC staff will collaborate with the partner district staff to ensure the appropriate services and FAPE are adequately provided.

### **Special Education for Current Portage Lakes Career Center Students**

Each full-day student will be assigned an intervention specialist.

A representative from Portage Lakes Career Center must be invited to all IEP meetings for current 1/2 day students. Staff from PLCC will provide feedback from CTE instructors to inform a student's IEP in collaboration with the partner school's case managers.

PLCC will annually review and write the IEP for all incoming full-day juniors whose IEP is due October 1st or later. For seniors who attended full day during their junior year, PLCC will complete the IEP documentation from the beginning of the school year. PLCC will take over responsibility for documentation on October 1st for seniors who attended half-day during their junior year and transferred to full day status the following year.

A representative from the partner school will be invited to serve as District Representative at all IEP meetings held by PLCC staff for full-day students. Portage Lakes Career Center staff will ensure the student, the parent, the district of residence (if different than the partner school district), an intervention specialist, and a general educator have all been invited to the IEP meeting. PLCC School Counselors will also be invited to participate in full-day student's IEP meetings.

All original documentation is provided to the partner school after an IEP or ETR meeting is conducted.

Portage Lakes Career Center staff will provide Procedural Safeguards for all IEP meetings for full-day students. PLCC staff will also document the team discussions during the IEP meeting and provide the Prior Written Notice (PR-01) to parents after the meeting.

### **Alternative Placements**

Students attending an alternative school setting during their 10th-grade year will attend PLCC as a half-day student for the first year of the program. The student may attend PLCC full day upon the IEP team's decision for the second year. Partner school teams and families should take into consideration progress towards behavior goals when a student who has been alternatively placed applies to PLCC.

### **Internal Monitoring Process**

Portage Lakes Career Center's internal monitoring team will meet monthly to review an IEP/ETR pair, utilizing the tools provided to them during their Internal Monitoring Team Training with the State Support Team for Region 8. This includes the IDEA Monitoring Process Guide and Indicator 13 checklist. They will maintain an electronic tally of data to identify areas of need.



The internal monitoring team will consist of the staff from the special education department, inclusive of the assistant principal and the intervention specialists. General education teachers and school counselors will be asked to be a part of the review process on a case-by-case basis to address individual student needs.

### **Related Services & Supplementary Supports**

Where related services are appropriate and included in a full-day student's IEP, such as speech, occupational, behavioral, or physical therapy, the partner district will provide those services and will collaborate with PLCC staff to do so. Partner school-related service providers are responsible for completing and distributing progress reports for IEP goals for which they provide services.

Where it is appropriate for a student to receive support from a 1-on-1 aide, the partner school will provide the aide support.

Where it is appropriate for an interpreter to be present at an IEP meeting, the partner school will secure and provide this service.

### **Academic Offerings**

Students who attend Portage Lakes Career Center for their academic courses are provided with the opportunity to take courses in a variety of settings with support commensurate to their needs. PLCC offers academic courses within the general education, co-taught, as well as resource room settings. Full-day students with an IEP will be enrolled in an Intervention & Enrichment period with an intervention specialist.

All course offering decisions however are subject to change and are dependent upon the enrollment needs of incoming students and staff available.

### **Progress Monitoring**

Portage Lakes Career Center will collect data on IEP goals and transition service activities for all full day students. Portage Lakes Career Center staff will report progress on all goals and transition service activities as often as reported for all other full-day students.

Portage Lakes Career Center will not formally report progress on any half-day student's IEP goals or transition services.

### **Parent/Guardian Involvement**

Parents of current Portage Lakes Career Center full-day students will be invited to participate in the review of their child's IEP and/or ETR. They will also be given an opportunity to complete a needs assessment to inform their student's IEP with their meaningful feedback and input. Portage Lakes Career Center staff will ensure that adequate attempts have been made to invite the parent to the IEP meeting and to elicit their contributions and participation. They will also document these attempts on a page kept within the IEP.

When necessary, the partner school will provide a list of possible surrogate parents to the intervention specialist, to invite to the IEP meetings.

### **Determining Eligibility for Special Education Services**

#### **Evaluations**

Evaluations for students attending PLCC who have been identified as having a disability will be conducted by representatives from the partner district. PLCC's intervention specialists will coordinate with the partner school evaluator in order to provide data as well as time and space to work with the student.

## **504 Plan and Evaluation Procedures**

Portage Lakes Career Center School Counselors will be responsible for conducting annual reviews of student 504 plans as well as tri-annual reviews of their 504 evaluations. When an initial referral is made to the PLCC School Counselor and a disability is suspected to qualify for 504 services, PLCC will conduct an initial 504 evaluation to determine qualification and necessary accommodations outlined in a 504 plan. Partner school representatives will be invited to participate in the 504 process. Portage Lakes Career Center will maintain the originals of 504 documentation they create and initiate.

## **Communication & Planning with Partner Schools**

Meetings with partner school personnel are held throughout the year including:

**Superintendent Meeting-** A monthly meeting of Portage Lakes Career Center's superintendent and the superintendents of all of the partner schools.

**Principal Meeting-** A bi-annual meeting of Portage Lakes Career Center's principal with the principals from each of the partner districts.

**Special Services Meeting-** An annual meeting, typically held in the fall, to outline current special education services at Portage Lakes Career Center. The assistant principal at Portage Lakes Career Center, in collaboration with the special education staff, invite the partner school special education directors, school psychologists, and coordinators to this meeting for collaboration.

## **Discipline Procedures & Behavior**

When a student is suspended from Portage Lakes Career Center, the partner school will be notified. When a student is suspended from their partner school, Portage Lakes Career Center will be notified.

If a student reaches 10 consecutive or non-consecutive days of out-of-school suspension, the IEP team will reconvene to have a Manifestation Determination meeting, led by partner district personnel.

If the disciplinary action includes a recommendation to the superintendent for expulsion, and the team determines that the behavior is not a manifestation of the student's disability, an expulsion hearing will be set by the PLCC Superintendent's office with the student and family.

If the disciplinary action includes a recommendation to the PLCC superintendent for expulsion, and the team determines that the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability, the manifestation determination meeting will immediately segue into an IEP meeting to discuss proper placement and the student's least restrictive environment.

If a student's behavior warrants a Functional Behavior Assessment and subsequent Behavior Intervention Plan, the partner school will conduct the assessment and present the information at a team meeting that includes representatives from Portage Lakes Career Center. If a full day student comes to PLCC with an existing Behavior Intervention Plan, the assigned Intervention Specialist will annually review and update it with the student's IEP team.

## **Exam Accommodations**

Classroom based accommodations and modifications, as outlined in the student's IEP or 504 plan, will be followed as agreed upon. **Note:** Some industry credentialing exams do not allow for accommodations or modifications. Portage Lakes Career Center's Assistant Principal and School Counselors utilize special education and 504 documentation on file to apply for these accommodations as allowable.

### **Enrollment of Multi-Year Grads and Planned Continuation of Ed Services**

When a student's transition plan includes meeting graduation requirements in more than four years after entering ninth grade, continuing special education services beyond twelfth grade, and intent to enroll in a program at Portage Lakes Career Center, there will be a team meeting to discuss this option. Representatives from Portage Lakes Career Center as well as the partner school will be present and a part of this team decision and its documentation in the student's IEP.

The Portage Lakes Joint Vocational School District is an equal opportunity educational institution. Employment and educational programs are offered without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, gender, disability, military status, ancestry, age, genetic information or any other legally protected characteristic and provide equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The district prohibits harassment of individuals in any form. Any alleged act of discrimination or harassment should be referred to Mr. Gregg Clark, Compliance Coordinator, at 330-896-8200.

## **Appendix A**

### **Special Education Internal Monitoring Process**

#### **Internal Monitoring**

1. Intervention Specialists utilize the IDEA Monitoring Process Guide as well as Indicator 13 checklist when writing IEPs.
2. The Special Education Department will meet as a team monthly to review one pair (IEP/ETR) and will track the data collected. The IDEA Monitoring Process Guide and Indicator 13 checklist will be utilized.
3. Assistant Principal will share constructive feedback with Intervention Specialists.
4. Questions and feedback from Intervention Specialists will be addressed.
5. Refer any identified needs for intensive training or technical assistance to Assistant Principal.
6. Assistant Principal will attend periodic training and legal updates and will share new and relevant information with the team.