



Empowering Futures: The Pleasantville Lab School Experience

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PLEASANTVILLE LAB SCHOOL

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About Us: Overview of Lab School Experience

Inclusive Dual Enrollment Program at
Westchester Community College, Valhalla,
NY.

Partnership between **Pleasantville Union
Free School District** and **Westchester
Community College**

Serves **students with disabilities aged 18-21**
through a unique transition-focused model.

Person-Centered Planning: Tailored career,
education, and personal development
pathways.

Student Profile

Age Range: 18-21

- High school students referred by their school districts during their final years of IDEA eligibility.

Have a Developmental Disability

Independence Level

- Capable of learning how to move around campus semi-independently. (will accommodate mobility needs, if appropriate)

Support Requirements:

- Able to function without a 1:1 aide, except for medical needs.
- Supports will be provided via peer mentors, program staff and natural supports.

College Environment Engagement:

- Prepared to participate appropriately in college classes. (academic level does not need be college-level)
- Able to engage in campus social opportunities with moderate support.





Our Support System

Overview: The Lab School fosters an inclusive environment with robust support systems tailored for students with disabilities.

Program Supports:

- ▶ Teacher
- ▶ Teaching Assistant
- ▶ Peer Mentors

Staff and Faculty Role:

- ▶ Provide **personalized support** through academic accommodations and Lab School only courses
- ▶ Offer **workplace readiness training** to prepare students for employment.

Empowerment and Independence:

- ▶ Students are encouraged to be **independent** while having access to **necessary support** when needed, fostering both **autonomy and security**.



Student Opportunities

Students engage in:

- ▶ **College Classes** for academic and personal enrichment.
- ▶ **Social Activities** with college peers.
- ▶ **Work Experiences** aligned with employment goals.
- ▶ **Functional Academics** for employment and independent living





Dual Enrollment in College Courses

Opportunity: Students can enroll in courses at Westchester Community College, enhancing their educational experience.

Course Offerings: A variety of classes are available for **educational advancement and personal enrichment**, including Voice & Diction, Group Dynamics, Fitness for Life, Basketball CPR/First Aid, Speech Communications, Voice, English 91/92, Graphic Design, Theater, & Music

Benefits of Dual Enrollment:

- ▶ **Boosts self-confidence** by engaging in college-level work.
- ▶ **Develops essential life skills** such as time management and study habits.
- ▶ **Explores career interests**, helping students align their education with future goals.



Workforce Development and Community Education Classes

Overview: Lab School as developed classes designed to enhance vocational skills and personal development in partnership with Workforce Developmental and Communication Division at Westchester Community College.

Course Offerings:

- ▶ **Vocational Exploration:** Comprehensive training covering various skills to prepare students for diverse vocational opportunities.
- ▶ **Personal Finance Management:** Learn essential financial skills for budgeting and saving.
- ▶ **Skills for Living (Cooking):** Gain practical cooking skills for daily living.
- ▶ **Computer Fundamentals:** Build foundational computer skills necessary for the workplace.



Life Skills Curriculum

Our Life Skills students also develop essential functional skills in Lab School classes, including:

▶ Personal Development

- **Self-awareness:** Understanding one's strengths, weaknesses, values, and emotions.
- **Emotional regulation:** Managing feelings like stress, anger, and anxiety in healthy ways.
- **Self-confidence:** Building a positive self-image and belief in one's abilities.
- **Goal setting:** Learning to set, pursue, and achieve personal goals.

▶ Social Skills

- **Communication:** Effective verbal and non-verbal communication, including active listening, expressing thoughts clearly, and understanding others.
- **Conflict resolution:** Handling disagreements constructively and resolving conflicts peacefully.

▶ Health and Wellness

- **Physical well-being:** Regular exercise, maintaining hygiene, sleep, and healthy lifestyle choices.
- **Mental health:** Recognizing mental health challenges, practicing mindfulness, and stress management techniques.
- **Sexual and reproductive health:** Knowledge about safe sex practices, relationships, and personal boundaries

▶ Functional ELA

- **Current Events, Functional Readings, Basic ELA skills**

Social Engagement & Peer Activities

Engagement Opportunities: Students can connect with college peers through clubs, events, and social gatherings, fostering a sense of community.

Peer Mentor Program: Initiatives like the Peer Mentor program and events such as **Common Hour** and **Westchester Community College trips** to create valuable connections and support networks.

Impact of Social Engagement:

- ▶ Enhances **confidence** and encourages participation.
- ▶ Develops **communication skills** through interaction.
- ▶ Promotes **independence** as students navigate social settings and relationships.



Real-World Work Experiences

Partnership with Campus Departments: The Lab School collaborates with various on-campus departments to create meaningful **work-based learning opportunities** tailored to students' employment goals and interests.

Work Placements: Students gain hands-on experience in fields such as:

- Food Preparation
- Maintenance
- Music
- Library Services
- Retail
- Gardening



Travel Training Program: B Line Bus in Westchester County

Objective: To promote independence and mobility for students with disabilities through **practical travel training** using the B Line bus system.

Reading the Bus Schedule: Students learn to read and understand bus schedules for effective trip planning.

Appropriate Behavior on the Bus: Training on expected conduct while riding the bus, including respect for others and safety.

Community Lunch Experience: Students practice ordering and paying for lunch independently, developing essential life skills.

Shopping Activity: Students engage in shopping or browsing in local stores, participating in scavenger hunts to reinforce their learning.

Benefits

Empowers students to **navigate their community** confidently.

Enhances social skills and independence.



Person-Centered Planning: Tailored for Individual Success

Individualized Pathways: This method promotes personalized career and personal development pathways, enhancing **self-advocacy** and empowering students to take ownership of their futures.

Success Stories:

- ▶ One student with an interest in firefighting pursued a **CPR/First Aid** certification to enhance his skills. He gained valuable hands-on experience by working at the **Fire Training Center** in Valhalla, allowing him to explore his career aspirations in the field. At his current college inclusion program at **Syracuse University**, he **volunteers at the local fire station**.
- ▶ One student enjoyed **video editing** and took a variety of classes that **focused on film**, including Digital Editing. After his experiences at the Lab School, he interned at the **Jacob Burns Center** in Pleasantville. He has now **been employed there more that 6 years**. He also works for **Westchester Community College** at as **IT Tech** and **Teaching Assistant** in the Lab School program



Vocational and Life Studies (VALS) Non-Credit Workforce Credential

After year one, the student may earn the **VALS Foundational workforce credential**, and after year two, the student may earn the **VALS Comprehensive workforce credential**.

Program Goals and Outcomes:

- ▶ Acquire and demonstrate the **knowledge and skills necessary to obtain employment**.
- ▶ Acquire and demonstrate the **executive functioning, social, self-management and problem-solving skills** necessary to be productive in a job and in life.
- ▶ Demonstrate an understanding of the **importance of attitude and professional ethics**.
- ▶ Acquire and demonstrate the **knowledge and skills necessary for independent living**.

Westchester
Community College

State University of New York

Foundational

Vocational and
Life Studies

Westchester
Community College

State University of New York

Comprehensive

Vocational and
Life Studies

What's next?



Several students have successfully transitioned to college and college-inclusion programs, many have opted to live away from home.

Inclusive U – Syracuse University
VUnited Scholars - Villanova University
Bridges Program – College of Mt. St. Vincent
Bridges Program – Orange Community College
Westchester Community College (matriculated student)
Manhattanville College (matriculated student)



Many students have been hired for part-time positions at Westchester Community College and beyond.

Workforce Development and Community Education at WCC
Security Office at WCC
Jacob Burns Center
Walgreens
Town Camp
Hardware Store
Five Guys
JCC Tarrytown
Sleepy Coffee



Other students have emerged as top candidates for various programs, demonstrating their preparedness for post-secondary life.

Project Search (ARC/WIHD)
Select Connects
The Nicholas Center
ARC Choices
JCC Vocational Program
Cardinal McClosky
College Success
Girl Again



Any questions!!



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