

2023-2024 OWLS Calendar
Housed at Mid-Plains Community College
601 West State Farm Rd, North Platte
(308) 568-9843

2023

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
July						
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

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September						
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December						
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31				14		

2024

S	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
January						
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February						
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March						
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30						

Calendar Key
 OWLS runs Mon-Fri; 9:00 - 2:30
 No OWLS
 OWLS Important Dates

August 14 Start Date

August 18 Teacher Inservice

August 23 Open House 1:30 - 2:30

September 4 Labor Day

October 13 Fall Break

October 20 Teacher Inservice

Nov 22 - 24 Thanksgiving Break

Dec 21 - Jan 2 Christmas Break

January 19 Teacher Inservice

February 19 PLC / Teacher Inservice

March 8 Spring Break

March 15 Teacher Inservice

Mar 29-Apr 1 Easter Break

May 10 Last Day





OWLS

Opportunity With Life Skills Transitional Program

EDUCATIONAL SERVICE UNIT 16

**"Serving students from Arthur, Brady, Hershey, Hyannis, Maxwell,
McPherson, Mullen, North Platte, Ogallala, Paxton, Perkins, South Platte,
Sutherland, Stapleton, Thedford, and Wallace"**

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023–24

OWLS is an enriched transition program for high school students with intellectual disabilities, (ages 16–21), located on the campus of Mid Plains Community College in North Platte, NE.

This program began its first year in the Fall of 2015, and is a cooperative program made possible by:

- Educational Service Unit 16
- Local School Districts in ESU 16 area
- Mid Plains Community College

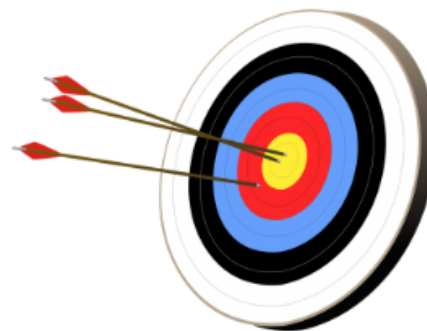
The program is located in the Mid Plains Community College South Campus, Pod A, Room 101



Goals and Vision of the Program:

1. To prepare students for the workforce through academics, social skills, life skills, and vocational skill development
2. To increase independence in all environments
3. To promote student self-determination and self-advocacy
4. To promote lifelong learning
5. To provide agency linkages for adult services

GOAL SETTING



Student Eligibility for the Program:

The IEP team members drive the decision regarding participation in the OWLS program. Discussions should begin no later than age 14 when the Transition Plan within the IEP is established. The IEP team should take into consideration the student's intellectual disability, transition outcomes, strengths, needs, and graduation plan. Some students may graduate "socially" with their peers in the ceremony, but remain under IEP services until age 21 when their educational eligibility ends.

Additional considerations will be: regular school and work attendance, maturity level of the individual, the ability and desire to hold a job in the community, the capacity to be on a college campus and access environments, the willingness to participate in college activities, and respecting and following the rules of the program.

Program Curriculum:

Each student's individually designed program is based upon measurable post-secondary goals identified by the student, parent, and other members of the educational team. It could include activities such as:

Academic:

- Math & Financial Management
- Life Skills Reading
- Skills for Independent Living
- Classes through the Community Outreach programs through MPCC

Social:

- Social Skills Training
- Involvement in activities on community and campus
- Develop Self-Advocacy Skills
- Engage in Social activities

Recreation & Leisure:

- Explore hobbies and special interests
- Use community athletic facilities
- Use College athletic facilities
- Attend concerts, plays, and shows on campus and in

the community

Enrichment:

- Access current technology
- Learn skills in the community

Vocational:

- Improve vocational skills
- Engage in Service Learning
- Learn how to get and keep a job
- As part of the student's IEP plan, the OWLS Program may provide jobsite training in community businesses. This would be determined by the IEP team. Based on the needs of the student, the home district will provide the job coach and transportation to and from the job site.



Staff:

Program staff includes 1 – Certified Teacher, and 1 – Educational ParaProfessional. Related Service Staff are also available per the student’s IEP. These may include: Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, and Speech Language Pathologists.

The School Day:

The school day for students begins at 9 a.m. and ends at 2:30 p.m. CT, Monday – Friday.

Lunches:

Students will learn to prepare their lunches, eat at the college cafeteria or in a restaurant.

OWLS staff will provide supervision throughout the lunch period. The lunches prepared by the student will be paid for through the OWLS program. The lunches at the college cafeteria and lunches at restaurants students will be required to send money. A notice will be sent to parents.

Payment for the Program:

Your home school district pays tuition for your attendance in the OWLS Program. This payment to ESU 16 includes academic instruction, assistive technology, training in the community, and specialized related services, (such as speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy) as identified in your IEP.

Transportation:

Transportation to and from the home school district to the program site is furnished by that district. It is the responsibility of the student/family to notify the home school district should you decide not to use the provided transportation from time to time. Transportation to and from community training will be provided through ESU 16 personnel with the OWLS vehicle, the community transportation system (Public Transit), or by one of the home districts. If medical, mental health, or other appointments are scheduled through the school day, it is the responsibility of the student/parents to provide transportation to meet the need.

Students may be trained to use specialized transportation systems such as Handi-Bus, as part of their transportation (travel) training. During the learning phase of this routine, the associated costs will be paid by the OWLS program.

Since transportation is provided by ESU 16 or the home district, the use of personal cars is discouraged.

School Calendar:

The OWLS calendar will follow the home district calendar closely. The OWLS Program runs 5 days a week from 9 – 2:30 CT. A calendar will be made available the spring of the prior year for IEP teams to review.



Student Conduct:

Expectations for OWLS students:

Attendance:

OWLS expects students to attend every meeting of the classes. Attendance is essential to success. You are expected to follow the attendance policy of your home district. Your daily attendance is reported to your school district monthly. Excessive unexcused absences will result in a meeting of the IEP team. The team will implement strategies to deal with the absences, which may include student removal from the program because of lack of continuity needed to meet designated post-secondary goals. Since OWLS students are young adults, they themselves are instructed to notify their OWLS teacher, (if appropriate) by phone or text in the event of an absence.

Behavior:

OWLS students will behave in an appropriate adult manner at all times, using language that is appropriate. Extreme aggressiveness, profanity, and inappropriate gestures are not acceptable. Students will treat staff members, other students, and visitors with respect. Students will respect the privacy, personal property, and personal space of their classmates. Students will dress appropriately. Shirts displaying drug and alcohol messages are not permitted, and undergarments should not be seen.

Students will not use or have in their possession alcohol, illegal substances, mind altering substances, look-alike drugs or weapons while on the premises of OWLS. Any student suspected of possessing or being under the influence of any illegal substances will be referred to the Superintendent's office of their home district.

OWLS students are expected to conduct themselves as responsible law-abiding citizens. Examples of misconduct for which students are subject to disciplinary action include but are not limited to the following:

1. Dishonesty in any form such as cheating, furnishing false information or misuse of funds.
2. Obstruction or disruption of any academic, social, or administrative activity.
3. Threats, physical harm, or verbal abuse of any person on MPCC/ESU Property or at a MPCC/ESU activity
4. Theft or damage of property of MPCC/ESU
5. Unauthorized entry to, or use of, any MPCC/ESU facilities.
6. Disorderly conduct or lewd, indecent, racial or obscene conduct or expression on MPCC/ESU property or functions.
7. Gambling on MPCC/ESU property
8. Failure to comply with the directions of MPCC/ESU officials.



9. Theft, abuse, or other misuse of computer time or facilities, including but not limited to:

- A. Unauthorized entry into a file or program to use, read, or change the contents or for any other purpose.
- B. Unauthorized transfer of a file. Downloading apps or e-books without staff authorization.
- C. Unauthorized use of another student's ID and password.
- D. Use of computing to interfere with the work of another student, faculty, or staff member
- E. Use of computing to send abusive messages or engage in sexting.
- F. Use of computing to interfere with the normal operation of the MPCC/ESU computing system.
- G. Use of computing to visit inappropriate websites. (including on-line gaming)



Medical Concerns:

There are no medical services on the MPCC campus and in the OWLS program. The teacher in the OWLS program will be trained in dispensing medication. Nebraska State Law requires that all students be immunized. These immunization records exist at the home school district. The nurse will secure these records with your assistance.

All medications should be given at home if at all possible. If you have medication needs during the designated program hours, please convey that information to the OWLS teacher. Since students are age 16 and older, they are permitted to take over the counter medication. Please visit with your son/daughter's case manager if you have specific questions/directions for use of over the counter medications. We ask you to complete an emergency contact form to keep on file. Please take the responsibility to keep information on the emergency form up-to-date.

College Mentors:

Students may be paired with a peer mentor as they become available. This program design is intended to provide opportunities for additional forms of support, as well as social relationship and friendship development. Each peer mentor will be referred by a counselor, professor, or appropriate person from the community. References will be checked to ensure that mentors are of high moral and ethical character. Mentors may spend from 1 hour to 12 hours weekly with OWLS students, depending upon the needs and schedules of both individuals. Some anticipated activities of mentors having lunch, attending social functions, or spending time with students in the OWLS classroom area.

Emergency Procedures:

Tornado Drill Procedures:

OWLS will conduct tornado drills in accordance with the MPCC. We will quickly and quietly proceed to the appropriate room where students will assume the position required for tornado safety. At the conclusion of the drill, we will quietly return to the OWLS dorm room.

Fire Drill Procedures:

In compliance with State Fire Marshal regulations, OWLS will hold monthly fire drills. During these drills, students and faculty will exit the building in a quiet, orderly fashion through the door that offers the safest exit. Students should then proceed to the parking lot on the south end of the building at a safe distance from the building. Students are to remain in this area until they receive an all-clear signal from an authorized person.



Weather and School Cancellation or Dismissal:

Listen to KNOP TV for information on MPCC cancellation, OWLS Cancellation, and/or cancellation of your local school district. If your home school district is closed due to weather, emergency, or the district has determined it is not safe travel conditions, you will not be expected to attend the OWLS program. Please notify the OWLS teacher by calling 305-568-9843.

Use of Specialized Technology:

The OWLS classroom has available the latest formats of assistive technology. Staff is fully trained and able to teach the use of technology to students.

Specialized programs and devices are available to assist students with reading and writing challenges. For more information on possible options, visit with your case manager. This will also be discussed at the IEP team meeting.



Media Coverage:

Newspapers, television and other media or groups sometimes wish to take and publish pictures of the program and its students. In addition, the OWLS staff and students may make conference presentations or other presentations as requested by groups in the community and state. ESU 16 also has a website and facebook page which includes pictures of youth. You will be asked to sign a release to photograph and publish. You may opt out, if desired.



Educational Service Unit 16 does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any educational program or activity that it operates. ESU 16 is required by Title IX (20 U.S.C. § 1681) and 34 CFR Part 106 not to discriminate in such a manner. This requirement not to discriminate also applies to admission and employment. Any inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to ESU 16 Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary of the Office of Civil Rights, or both.

Title IX Coordinator: Amber Lutz, Business Manager,
314 West 1st Street Ogallala NE 69153,
alutz@esusixteen.org, (308) 284-8481.

For information regarding the ESU 16 procedure for complaints of sexual harassment including the complaint process, how to file a report or a complaint of sexual harassment, how to file a formal complaint of sexual harassment, and how ESU 16 will respond to such complaints see Board Policy; Article V, Section 1-a located at [Article V: Equity and Legal Compliance](#).



This signed receipt acknowledges receipt of the 2023–24 Opportunities With Life Skills (OWLS) Transitional Program Handbook. This receipt acknowledges that it is understood that the handbook contains student conduct and discipline rules. The undersigned, as student, agrees to follow such conduct and discipline rules.

Student Signature

Student Printed Name

Date

Parent Signature

Parent Printed Name

Date

District Representative Signature

District Representative Printed Name

Date