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WISCONSIN RAPIDS
PUBLIC SCHOOL'S
VIRTUAL SCHOOL
HANDBOOK



2010/2011

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This handbook was created for Virtual Students only. The policies and procedures that follow in this handbook are in addition to the policies and procedure book that the Wisconsin Rapids Public School District provides to each student.

Welcome...

We welcome you to the Wisconsin Rapids Public School's Virtual Education Program!

The 4K -12 virtual education program has been added to the services offered to both District and surrounding community students. We are thrilled to offer families another avenue for the education of their children through these services. We hope that your experience as a member of the WRPS virtual program will be enjoyable, challenging, and productive.

9-12 Pilot Description

The pilot program is being developed to better meet the needs of some of our students. Enrollment requests will be reviewed on an individual basis by school personnel. The pilot program exists for families currently in a virtual program who wish to continue, able learner students who need additional programming options, homebound students, students in a home-based learning environment, or students with unique circumstances.

Why choose WRPS for your Virtual School Program?

This virtual school component offers families the option to learn in a self-paced environment and customize education to support student goals. Virtual School students are welcome to participate in any combination of classes, field studies, and school activities including extra curricular and sports. This option is a great solution for families who want to be totally involved in all aspects of their child(ren)'s education.

Virtual School Program Mission and Vision Statement

The mission of WRPS is to ensure that by working together with home and community, we are dedicated to providing the best education for every student, enabling each to be a thoughtful, responsible contributor to a changing world.

WRPS believes:

- Each student is the first consideration of the educational process
- All students learn
- Learning is a life-long process
- In a safe, caring, and respectful learning environment
- All students can become effective citizens of the community, state, nation, and the world
- Meaningful home, school and community involvement is vital to continuous improvement

Discrimination Statement

WRPS does not discriminate against pupils on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, physical, mental, emotional, learning disability or handicap in its education programs. Federal law prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of age, race, color, national origin, sex or handicap. The Wisconsin Fair Employment Law also prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of creed, marital status, ancestry, arrest record, conviction record, or sexual orientation.

WRPS Virtual School Program definitions for clarification:

Regularly enrolled students: a student currently enrolled in WRPS or open enrolled into WRPS, attending classes in face-to-face instruction in that facility.

Virtual program students: a student currently enrolled in WRPS or open enrolled into WRPS taking courses through the Virtual School program or a combination of virtual programming and face-to-face instruction.

Enrollment Procedures

Students must complete an application for virtual programming (same registration process for all WRPS students). Before submitting the application, students may complete a Virtual Readiness Checklist and will discuss the decision with a counselor or other school personnel to determine if virtual learning is appropriate.

Students from outside Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools must have approved open enrollment agreements. (See information on www.wrps.org.) Students who are new to the District must complete student registration materials by the third Friday in September. Once the application for virtual learning has been approved, students and parents will meet with school personnel to develop an individualized program plan. This plan is reviewed on an on-going basis.

Students in a full-time home-based learning environment have access to online course offerings. Students taking online courses in a home-based environment will be encouraged to take at least one course on campus and participate in co-curricular activities. Those students taking one or more classes on campus will be required to pay the District Book and Material fee. Transportation for these activities would be the responsibility of the family.

The District will pay the fee for the District-approved online courses if the student is participating in the pilot program.

District Coordination

The Local Education Guide (LEG) will serve as the local facilitator for the student who takes a virtual course. Counselors and other school personnel will serve as the LEG, based on the student.

Curriculum and Course Materials

In order to provide high-quality, standards driven, proven curriculum, course products will be provided through franchising or lease agreements with other virtual school providers or corporations who have developed and aligned these courses. Products will only be considered that have the capability to expand the existing curriculum. At the elementary level, students who are utilizing K12 as a curriculum vendor will be allowed to continue through grade 12. At the secondary level, the curriculum will be provided by CESA 9 Wisconsin Virtual School (WVS).

A student can expect to spend just as many hours on an online course as they would spend if they were attending on a traditional basis.

A student will exercise responsible, ethical behavior. Remember that Internet information ranges from being useful and scholarly to being incorrect and offensive. No one other than the enrolled student can complete any portion of an assignment, activity or exam. No one other than the enrolled student can make revisions to an assignment, activity or exam.

Grades/Assessments

District assessments may be used to monitor the progress of students participating in online learning at both the 4K-5 and 6-12 level.

At the 7-12 level, grades received for virtual/online coursework will count the same way as any other course grade. The school must receive an official record of the final grade before the credit is determined. All grades received as a result of a student taking a District-approved course will be recorded on the student's official transcript.

WRPS Virtual School students are required to take state mandated tests, such as the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam (WKCE). Other appropriate assessments may be administered as appropriate such as: checkpoints, district writing assessments, grade level reading assessments, or MAP (Measure of Academic Progress).

Virtual Learning Requirements

Elementary: Virtual learning students will meet the requirements of the 4th grade advancement policy.

Secondary: Virtual learning students will meet the requirements of the 8th grade advancement policy. The building administrator and counselor will determine the number of classes that are appropriate for a student.

Transportation

Students choosing to enroll in the Virtual School program will provide their own transportation if they choose to enroll in a face-to-face course, or any other course requiring transportation other than the regularly scheduled resident district transportation.

Computer, Internet and Technical Support

If a student is fully enrolled virtually (four or more virtual classes per semester), a \$200 stipend per family will be provided for Internet access for 10 months. A District laptop will be provided for students fully enrolled virtually in grades 8 – 12 (four or more virtual classes per semester). The District can assist by providing a used computer system with minimal requirements related to hardware and software for students in grades K - 7. Any equipment supplied by the District needs to be submitted annually for maintenance. If the student is using District equipment, all support requests and maintenance will be provided at the Technology Department office Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and needs to be initiated by appointment only (please call 715-424-6715). Students and parents will be required to sign and comply with the District's Acceptable Use Policy.

Student Support

Daily programming and access to school services will be arranged and scheduled through the student's assigned school counselor and/or school-site virtual learning coordinator. Please contact the building office where your child is assigned.

- 4K-7 th grade	Vesper Community Academy	715-424-6786
- 8 th & 9 th grade	Wisconsin Rapids Jr. High	715-424-6730
- 10 th -12 th grade	Lincoln High School	715-424-6750

Face-to-Face Opportunities at WRPS Schools

Depending on the grade level of the Virtual School students, there are several optional opportunities for face-to-face instruction at select district locations. If class sizes permit, 4K-5th grade students may participate in art, music, physical education (specials), and/or other project based classes at Vesper Community Academy. Sixth and 7th grade students may participate in specials at the new 6/7 building. Students in 8th and 9th grade may participate at the new 8/9 center and students in grades 10-12 may participate in classes at Lincoln High School.

Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) & Governor's Academic Excellence Scholarship

Students must be enrolled in WRPS programming an equivalent of 75% of their full-time student status or greater for them to be eligible for WIAA athletic participation or the Governor's Academic Excellence Scholarship. Students must be enrolled at a full-time status.

Full Time Students

Lincoln High School requires 22.5 credits for a diploma. To successfully graduate with a LHS diploma and be counted as a full-time student at the high school level, students need to take 5-6 academic credits per year or be enrolled under the special student classification.

All students in grades 9-12 must be legitimately working towards creating a portfolio for a home school diploma or must be legitimately working toward graduation requirements necessary for earning a diploma.

Students in grades 6-8 will be required to take four classes per semester (four credits per year) to be considered full time status. Outside of the District face-to-face classes, 6-8 grade virtual students will be offered Wisconsin Virtual School (WVS) classes only: Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and Science. Students may participate in any elective classes at the buildings, or families may purchase other support programs for their students. During this pilot year, unless WVS begins offering encore classes for grades 6-8, the District will not pay for supporting virtual encore programming.

Students that are taking face-to-face classes at one of our facilities will be offered either study halls or use of the library if necessary work time is required between face-to-face classes.

Special students may have less than the minimum program if they are enrolled in an alternative program approved by the Board and supported by the school district funds. Such students may include, but are not limited to, students with exceptional educational needs, children at risk, truants, school-age parents, homebound students and students who are excused from school attendance to participate in a program leading to high school graduation or high school equivalency.

Resident students attending public school in another school district under the full-time public school open enrollment law shall be considered full-time district students.

LEGAL REF.: Sections 121.004(5) AND (7) Wisconsin Statutes 118.51
APPROVED: December 1980, REVISED: August 2001

Students will be required to check with the athletic director in their school to make sure that they are eligible for WIAA sanctioned athletics. These guidelines have been established so that attendance rules can be followed for WIAA athletic participation. All co-curricular and athletic guidelines and rules apply in WRPS. For additional information students should contact their school's athletic director.

Online Attendance

Attendance in online programming is based on performance, as well as participation. It is measured not only by logging into the course or courses, but by successful submission of completed work, participation in course activities such as threaded discussions and communication with the online instructor.

Enrichment

If a course is needed for enrichment, the principal, guidance counselor, virtual coordinator, parents, and student will work to find resources to support student needs.

Course Failure

If a student fails a virtual course, that student's academic record and individual learning plan will be reviewed by the respective principal, guidance counselor, and/or virtual coordinator to see if the Virtual School should be continued or if the student should return to the regular face-to-face instruction within the district.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE WISCONSIN RAPIDS VIRTUAL PROGRAM

1. Is your course similar to other programs like IQ Academy or Connections?

YES.

As near as we can tell, those programs also use the AVENTA courses that we will be using. Therefore, course selection should be very similar.

2. DO our classes have the Illumin-Night when the teacher tells the students when to log in and everyone can see the teacher at the same time?

YES.

But there is a difference in this. Our program is a little more Asynchronous – meaning that all students do not need to be at the same place at the same time. While the teacher will have times to log in all together, they may not be as often. However, you also have the opportunity to work with a Local teacher who can also answer questions for you and give you extra help. You will get office contact information for your local teacher that you can also contact.

3. Do they use Blackboard and other forms of communication?

YES.

That should be very similar between the different programs.

4. Do the students have the opportunity to work ahead?

YES.

This may be different from the other fulltime Virtual programs that are more SYNCHRONOUS (all students on at the same time doing the same thing). You may work ahead, or take time off and when you log back in, your syllabus will readjust to the end date you have selected for your class.

5. Can students finish EARLY, before their end date?

YES.

You may finish a class early. You can set an ending date but you are welcome to move it up if you feel you can accomplish the work in less time. This is especially appealing to able learners!

6. Can I take some classes online and some at school?

YES.

You may choose any combination of core and elective classes that are available to you.

7. Are there opportunities for Advanced Placement Classes?

YES.

There are roughly 20 different Advanced Placement Classes in the Wisconsin virtual School course list, ranging from Math, Science, Social Studies, Foreign Language, Economics, Art, etc.

8. Do you provide curriculum for special needs children?

Depending on the child's IEP, we can tailor our curriculum to meet his or her needs. The main issue to be considered is whether or not the independent nature of online instruction will be the best fit for a student.

Acceptable Computer Use

Students are responsible for their behaviors and are expected to comply with the Technology Acceptable Use Code of Conduct in their school district of residence. A copy of this form will be provided at registration. Please return the form at the back of this handbook to the academy/school office.

1. Supervision is required when students are in labs or using technology resources.
2. Communication will follow professional standards. Offensive messages or pictures will not be sent, displayed, or downloaded. District harassment policies apply.
3. Users of technology resources will respect the rights and privacy of others. Each student will only use his/her assigned password/ID and will not trespass into the files, folders, or work of other users. Teachers do have the right to access the work of students in their classes as it pertains to the class. Students will not allow other students to access the computers of networks using his/her password/ID.
4. Copyright laws will be respected. All quotations, references, graphics, video clips, digital music and other information will be cited to give credit to the originator.

Any student participating in a virtual learning course is subject to all school rules and regulations established by the School Board and the individual school.

Computer Lease Checkout

Equipment Identification: _____

Computer Serial Number: _____

Monitor: (if separate) _____

Modem: _____

Internet Allowance: _____

The district will cover the repairs of the computer hardware, as long as the malfunction resulted from normal usage and/or was due to an accident.

The school district will only assume responsibility for leased computer hardware and software. Maintenance and technical support will be limited to those computers only.

I have read and understand the above computer lease agreement.

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Check off list of Forms needed:

- ◆ _____ Registration Form/Card
- ◆ _____ Acceptable Use Agreement
(Available in the school office where your child is assigned)
- ◆ _____ Computer Lease Form

For more information, please contact: