Updated 12-5-2011

Wisconsin Rapids Public School's Virtual School Handbook

2011/2012

Table of Contents

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 WRPS 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.

WRPS Virtual Program

This program has been developed to better meet the needs of some of our students. Enrollment requests will be reviewed on an individual basis by school personnel. The 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 program students are welcome to participate in any combination of classes, field studies, and school activities including extracurricular 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: students currently enrolled in WRPS or open enrolled into WRPS, attending classes in face-to-face instruction in that facility.

Virtual program students: students currently enrolled in WRPS or attending through a 66.03 agreement. These WRPS students are 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 must complete the Virtual Readiness Checklist and 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 an approved 66.03 agreement between WRPS and their home school district prior to the 3rd Friday in September. 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 will be the responsibility of the family.

To be considered for the WRPS virtual program, all new students (outside District) need to enroll before the third Friday count in September. This enrollment process from outside the District needs to be approved by both WRPS and home school District (66.03 agreement). Any student currently enrolled within the District with

the desire to receive virtual programming must apply and receive support from school personnel and family. The final decision will be made by the virtual school administration. If it is determined that the virtual program is not necessary to meet the need of the student, the family could be asked to pay for the course fees.

WVS Student Contact and Drop Guidelines

The Wisconsin Rapids Public School District recognizes that only through continuous communication can students be successful in an online course. Within each course the instructor can provide weekly minimum work requirements. It is essential that the student and instructor maintain regular contact through email.

To ensure that our students are aware of this commitment, the process outlined below is **recommended**:

- If the student does not submit the expected number of assignment(s) within a period of seven (7) consecutive days, the student and the Local Education Guide (LEG) will be notified of the student's unacceptable progress for submitting assignments.
- If the student does not respond to the notification by submitting assignments within seven (7) days, the instructor(s) will make contact with the student/LEG again.
- If the student does not respond by submitting assignments after the second notification, WVS and the instructor will assume that the student does not intend to remain in the course. The district's division administrator and LEG will be contacted. The district will then verify that the student be administratively dropped from the course.
- The student understands that for each online course there are a minimum number of assignments that must be completed each week. Failure to submit the minimum number of assignments on a weekly basis may result in removal from the course by WVS and the local school district and may result in a failing grade or incomplete being reported to the school district.

What commitment do families have if a student drops a virtual class?

Wisconsin Rapids School District will pay the tuition for all courses completed by students. Students not completing courses or dropping them before the end of the semester (but after the first 14 days of the course) will be provided with three options. If the student drops the course and wishes to have it removed from their record, (as though it were never attempted), they must reimburse the district for the cost of the course. If the student drops the course and does not reimburse the district or fails to complete the minimum requirements to earn a passing grade, it will appear as an "F" on the student's transcript.

If the student wishes to take an incomplete, the coursework must be completed within the five month window from the start of the class. Any extenuating

circumstances must be approved by virtual school administration. Costs associated with an extension will become the responsibility of the student and/or family.

District Coordination

At the elementary level, a licensed teacher will be assigned to all students enrolled in virtual programming. At each building, students enrolled in WVS will have a Local Education Guide (LEG) assigned as the local facilitator for the virtual course. Counselors and other school personnel will serve as the LEG, based on the student needs. Students not using WVS curriculum will be monitored by the WRPS virtual teacher or coordinator.

Curriculum and Course Materials/Book and Material Fees

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/families may choose from a list of approved providers. Students who are utilizing K12 as a curriculum vendor will be allowed to continue through grade 12, however, in order to be eligible for a LHS diploma, students in grades 9-12 must chose the curriculum provided by CESA 9 - Wisconsin Virtual School (WVS). In selecting virtual programming at respective grade levels, virtual students will be afforded the same classes offered to students in the traditional brick and mortar building. Thus, for example, foreign language classes will be offered starting in the 7th grade.

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.

The District book and material fee assessed for virtual learners is as follows:
Elementary – No fee
Secondary students taking up to two classes on site - $20.00
Secondary students taking three or more classes on site - $45.00

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.   At the end of 8th grade, students and their families must determine whether or not they are bound to earn a diploma. If a student has the desire to

earn an LHS diploma, they must take WVS classes for the virtual portion of their learning.

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 check will be paid to the internet provider of each family.   The District may provide, upon request, a computer system with the necessary requirements related to hardware and software for students in grades 4K - 12. Any equipment supplied by the District needs to be submitted for maintenance upon request by the WRPS Technology Support Department. 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. **All support requests need to be initiated by appointment only (please call 715-424-6715, option 0)**. When possible, software support will be performed remotely. Should onsite support be needed, please be prompt for scheduled

appointments. Support requests arriving 15 minutes after a scheduled appointment will need to be rescheduled.   Also, please be aware that WRPS technical support will not be provided for personally owned hardware and software (personal applications, computers, routers, wireless, printers, modems, cabling, Internet service, etc). Students participating in virtual programming are responsible for data backup. Data will not be recovered if lost. If a computer is broken, it will not be repaired at the time of the service request, it will be replaced with a spare.   It will be best practice to use a service like Google Docs or Gaggle to create and save work, as the service is available from any computer with an Internet connection and also the data is backed up regularly. 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-7th grade	Vesper Community Academy	715-424-6786
- 6th & 7th grade	WVS Students at WRAMS	715-424-6740
- 8th & 9th grade	Wisconsin Rapids Jr. High	715-424-6730
- 10th-12th 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 middle school.   Students in 8th and 9th grade may participate at the Junior High and students in grades 10-12 may participate in classes at Lincoln High School.

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.

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.

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

Student Athlete Expectations

Virtual students are encouraged to participate in athletics and co-curricular activities through the Wisconsin Rapids Public School system. In order to be eligible, students must be enrolled in school, complete the required paperwork, and follow the rules of the athletic and co-curricular code. Part of following the code includes the District monitoring academic progress at six and 12 weeks and the final grade report of the 1st semester; as well as at 24 and 30 weeks and the final grade report of the 2nd semester. Students failing to meet 60% proficiency in any of the courses at these dates will be classified as earning an "F" grade which will be factored into determining eligibility according the guidelines established by WRPS and the WIAA.

For additional information, students should refer to the academic eligibility guidelines found in the WRPS Activities Code.

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 full-time 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.

9. *Can a student take virtual classes as an enrichment beyond the classes offered in the schools?*

   If a student takes an additional virtual class for enrichment/acceleration beyond a full brick and mortar class schedule, the Able Learner program process must be utilized.

10. Can virtual learner receive band/orchestra lessons?

    In order to take music lessons within the District, the learner must be a participant of band/orchestra and participate in performances.

Acceptable Computer Use

Students are responsible for their behaviors and are expected to comply with the WRPS Acceptable Use Policy. A copy of this policy will be provided at registration. Additional items specific to students participating in virtual programming:

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.

Please return the form at the back of this handbook to the academy/school office

Computer Lease Checkout

WRPS Asset Tag: _____

Computer Serial Number: _____

Monitor: (if separate)_____

MAC Address:_____

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**