

Sparta Area School District

Article 433 – E-Learning Opportunities

The Board of Education recognizes that e-learning in its various forms is an appropriate delivery system for some students. E-learning is one strategy to enhance and expand course offerings currently available to District students. It may also be used to provide an educational alternative better suited to the learning needs of a diverse population of students.

E-learning represents a spectrum of experiences from courses that incorporate on-line activities and resources into the traditional setting (blended courses) to virtual course offerings. It is the goal of the District that students be exposed to and have experience with e-learning prior to graduation. This may include:

- Participation in blended courses that incorporate relevant web-based activities which enhance and extend traditional classroom learning.
 - Locally developed coursework offered in a virtual environment as an alternative to the traditional classroom experience.
 - Virtual courses developed by external providers and available locally.

Before participating in e-learning opportunities utilizing District owned equipment or registering for virtual courses, students must have a District Internet agreement form on file and agree to hold the District harmless for any offense or injury that may be suffered as a result of student access to information on the Internet and/or disclosing personal information.

Guidelines for enrollment and participation:

- Students enrolled in the District will have the option to participate in one online class per semester as long as they fulfill the requirements of this policy. Administration may approve additional online courses.
- State statute allows resident students who are currently home schooled to enroll in up to two high school courses per semester. These may include traditional, blended or locally developed virtual courses. For home schooled students, the District will not pay for virtual course work provided by outside vendors.
- Per state statute, the District may not enroll non-resident, full time online students.
- Resident students previously enrolled in a virtual school or a home-school setting may be allowed to participate full time in virtual course work to allow them to continue the learning experiences unique to virtual schools and the home school setting.

Students enrolled in virtual course work will be in compliance with compulsory attendance as long as they remain current with assignments, tests and anticipated completion dates.

The District will not be responsible to provide Internet connectivity or computer equipment for home use unless outlined below:

- Students who demonstrate financial need and do not have access to adequate technology at home as identified in the guidelines, may apply for assistance from the District to facilitate their enrollment in virtual course work.
- The District may need to provide a computer and Internet access to a home-bound student to meet the needs of their IEP or 504 plan.
- If funded by the District, Internet access must be filtered for content.

Virtual Course Opportunities:

Application for enrollment in virtual courses (locally or externally developed) should be made in conjunction with normal course registration and scheduling.

The following guidelines may be used to determine student enrollment in a virtual course work:

- If also offered by the District in a traditional setting, the student may be allowed to participate in a comparable virtual course due to an unavoidable scheduling conflict or special circumstance
- Students may participate in virtual coursework to meet the requirements of an educational plan (special education, gifted/talented, 504, at risk or ESL).
- Students expelled from the regular school setting may, at the discretion of the administration, participate in virtual course work if educational services are to be provided as part of their IEP, 504 plan, or as part of an expulsion order.

A decision to deny a request for participation in a virtual course may be appealed to the Superintendent or designee.

Participation in virtual coursework will not affect a student's eligibility to participate in co-curricular activities offered by the respective school of enrollment, contingent upon the student meeting requirements of the co-curricular handbook.

Face-to-face attendance requirements for virtual courses may be specified by the teacher or mentor and will be noted in the syllabus.

High school students that successfully complete virtual courses that meet District requirements will be awarded credit. Transcripts will have an indication of credits earned through virtual

courses. Grades received for virtual coursework will count the same as any other course grades and be recorded on the official student transcript.

Courses must be approved prior to student enrollment in order for the District to consider paying the class fee (when applicable) and for the student record to be included on the transcript.

To ensure quality, virtual coursework must:

- Be aligned with the vision of the District
 - Be aligned to the District's approved curriculum standards.
 - Have an identifiable curriculum that is consistent with District curriculum and local standards
 - Be taught and/or created by a highly trained and qualified licensed teacher that is certified to teach the content of the course
- Meet all applicable District policies
- Meet all applicable statutory requirements of the State

A District-based mentor will be assigned to students enrolled in virtual coursework for assistance and to monitor student progress in the course.

The District will purchase and provide required texts for virtual courses. The texts will remain the property of the District and will be returned to the school upon completion of the course.

The fees for virtual courses shall be borne by the District for students who complete the coursework and receive a passing grade. If the student does not complete the class or the student receives less than a passing grade, the school may request that the student/family reimburse the District for the course fee. A student who fails to reimburse the District as requested will not be allowed to register for future online course offerings.

In order to be successful, some students may require an orientation prior to participating in e-learning experiences.

Legal Reference: Wisconsin Statute 118.15

Cross Reference: Article 166 – Open Enrollment Program
Article 419 – Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy
Article 428 – Youth Options

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