Sparta Virtual Learning Academy

2020–2021

Design and deliver the best educational journey for ALL.

Sparta Area School District
900 East Montgomery Street
Sparta, Wisconsin 54656
Overview:
Spartan Virtual Learning Academy is a high quality, home-based virtual learning opportunity for students in Kindergarten through 12th grade. This program provides a public school option to families who prefer a flexible, home-based learning environment for their children. Our rich, interactive curriculum is taught through Sparta’s highly qualified certified teaching staff*, specially trained through our Modern Teacher platform on effective virtual teaching and learning strategies.

SASD teachers and faculty will empower students to thrive by providing academic and social emotional support through a personalized approach to meet the unique needs of each student. Teachers will help keep students on target and engaged by providing timely feedback and support while meeting regularly with students in our virtual platform. Students will be provided with the appropriate technology and resources needed for successful implementation. All students attending Spartan Virtual Learning Academy will qualify to participate in district co-curricular activities.

*If the course is unavailable through our teaching staff, students will be able to choose courses from our current online provider. (Fuel Education or Wisconsin Virtual School).

Every Day Learning:
Teachers will create lessons based on the essential standards for their courses or classes. All content will be available through the district learning management system.
- SeeSaw - PreKindergarten through grade 4
- Schoology - Grades 5 through 12

Students may experience daily instruction with a teacher who uses a variety of methods and structures including live lessons and independent lessons. If a student is unavailable for the live lessons, other instructional videos will be available for them to engage in the learning. Lessons may include practice activities, collaboration opportunities with peers, small group work, and designated time for individualized assistance. Students will have some flexibility in how they structure their daily learning, and should work collaboratively with the online teacher for individualized learning needs. (For example: A student may engage in the lessons, assignments, and assessments during the day or in the evening. However, teachers will be available to answer questions during the regular school day hours.)
Profile of a Successful Online Student:
When determining if the Sparta Virtual Learning Academy is the right fit for your student, review these questions for and with your potential online learner(s).

- **Student Support**: Does the student have an engaging adult to help monitor and support the instruction provided by the online teacher?

- **Time Management**: Can the student or the assisting adult create and maintain a study schedule?

- **Effective communication**: Can the student or the assisting adult ask for help, make contact with other students, and the online teacher through various means of communication (email, video conferencing, phone)?

- **Independence**: Can the student or assisting adult study and complete assignments without direct supervision of the teacher and maintain the self-discipline to stick to a schedule?

- **Motivation**: Does the student have a strong desire to learn skills, acquire knowledge and complete assignments on time?

- **Digital Competency**: Does the student or assisting adult know or is willing to learn how to open, create, and upload documentation in the learning management system?

Enrollment:
This program is a part of the Sparta Area School District, a public school district. Families already registered in the school district will need to fill out the Sparta Virtual Learning Academy Application Form between July 31st - August 12th for each student they wish to enroll in the program. Your child will be enrolled in their current school and the Sparta Virtual Learning Academy. Families that are not already enrolled in our district would need to open enroll into the Sparta Area School District prior to filling out the enrollment form.
**Attendance & Participation:**
Students are expected to enroll for an entire semester/trimester. Students will be expected to follow the daily or weekly schedule to stay on pace with the lessons. The pacing guide may be flexible through the online platform.

Clear expectations will be set by the online teacher and communicated to students and families at the beginning of the course. Failure to attend or make reasonable progress may result in having the course dropped, and this may limit future online courses offered to the student.

**Grading & Credits:**
Any Sparta Virtual Learning Academy course or class is treated like any other school district course or class, including grading practices and credits toward graduation. Regular graduation requirements apply as outlined in the district handbook. Full online students that meet graduation requirements may participate in graduation services.

**Communication:**
Two way communication with the family and online teacher will be important for a successful virtual learning experience. Families will have access to the online grading system through Skyward. The student or parent/guardian should communicate any issues such as illness, lack of progress, or other barriers that may exist with the online teacher.

**Students with Special Education Services:**
Students with disabilities will continue to receive all accommodations, modifications, specialized instruction, and related services as a student in the Sparta Virtual Learning Academy. Your child’s case manager will reach out to you to schedule an IEP team meeting to discuss your child’s services and how they will look and feel within the virtual setting.

**Student with Section 504 Plans:**
Students receiving accommodations and modifications under a 504 plan will continue to receive these services and supports as a student in the Sparta Virtual Learning Academy. Some accommodations and modifications may need to be removed or added based on the virtual setting. Your child’s 504 team will meet to discuss how these accommodations and modifications will look and feel within the virtual setting.
English Learners:
Students receiving accommodations, modification or support through our English Language Learner staff will continue to receive these services and supports in the Sparta Virtual Learning Academy.

Intervention:
If your student qualifies for individualized intervention, that support will continue to the maximum extent possible pending staffing.

Responsible Use Policy:
Students will be expected to follow their current school’s responsible use policy and student handbook guidelines.

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<tr>
<th>Student Responsibility</th>
<th>Virtual Academy Teacher Responsibility</th>
<th>Family Support Responsibility</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>❖ Follow the daily/ weekly schedule</td>
<td>❖ Create clear expectations and guidelines for their online course/class</td>
<td>❖ Ensure access to the necessary technology to participate in the program (the district provides the device)</td>
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<tr>
<td>❖ Log into the courses/classes per the schedule</td>
<td>❖ Create a daily and weekly schedule for students</td>
<td>❖ Provide support and encouragement</td>
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<tr>
<td>❖ Ask questions when you don’t understand</td>
<td>❖ Provide high quality lessons in the learning management system</td>
<td>❖ Provide structure and guidance as needed</td>
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<td>❖ Complete assignments</td>
<td>❖ Provide “live lessons” and office hours to support learning</td>
<td>❖ Monitor gradebook and pacing</td>
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<td>❖ Stay on pace</td>
<td>❖ Provide support to students through video conferencing, phone, email, or learning management system</td>
<td>❖ Be a liaison between the student and online teacher when needed</td>
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<td>❖ Communicate regularly with your online teacher and peers</td>
<td>❖ Provide quality feedback on assignments and assessments in a timely manner</td>
<td>❖ Support instruction as needed to support your child’s learning</td>
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<td>❖ Check feedback and grades on assignments and tests</td>
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<td>❖ Students are expected to be respectful, responsible, and safe while engaging in online learning.</td>
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Frequently Asked Questions:

What supplies do I need for the Sparta Virtual Learning Academy?

Please refer to your regular school’s grade level list. The district will provide the device during the first week in September.

My student is currently enrolled in Sparta’s online courses through Fuel Education or Wisconsin Virtual School. Do I need to now enroll them in the Sparta Virtual Learning Academy?

No. Our current online programming is still available. The Sparta Virtual Learning Academy is designed to meet the needs of our students and families during the COVID pandemic and is available for at minimum the entire 2020-2021 school year.

Can one sibling be enrolled in the virtual academy and another enrolled for in-building schooling?

Yes. You will only need to fill out the enrollment form for the students you want to attend the Sparta Virtual Learning Academy.

If my student is currently enrolled in Montessori, STEM, or High Point, will they be taught by a teacher from that program?

This will depend on enrollment. Your student will most likely be taught through one of the teachers from their Charter school, however, their daily and weekly contact schedule may look different than the traditional classroom students.

In the case of a closure due to COVID, will all students be enrolled in the virtual academy?

No. The Sparta Virtual Learning Academy is designed for a long term option for students. In the case of a short term closure, students will remain online with their traditional courses and teachers.

Is there an option to be part-time in-building and part-time virtual?

No. The Sparta Virtual Learning Academy is a completely online experience.

If there are co-curricular activities available, do the students in the Sparta Virtual Learning Academy qualify to participate?

Yes.
What will instruction look like?

The Sparta Virtual Learning Academy will offer a blend of both scheduled time and independent learning. Instructors will use a variety of effective teaching strategies to engage students in the learning process. There will be live lessons as well as lessons that have been recorded for students to view. Virtual meetings, including Zoom, will help make strong connections with students to support their individual learning needs. There will be designated virtual office hours, and a flexible weekly schedule for students to complete their work.

How are staff being trained to teach online learning?

Staff do not officially begin their contracts until August. However, many teachers have been working throughout the summer, including teachers delivering virtual summer school. The district is focusing on high quality professional development of effective online learning teaching strategies through outside organizations and in house trainers. The district is working to ensure all teachers are prepared to teach virtually.