

DCS SECONDARY VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION PROGRAM GUIDELINES

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MISSION

Our mission is to educate and empower all students to be college and career ready graduates -prepared to make positive contributions to our global society. Dothan City Schools' mission is to prepare all students for the choices and challenges of the 21st Century (the future). Our goal is to prepare all students to participate productively and responsibly in a rapidly changing society.

METHOD

Students attending DCS Virtual Instruction Program (VIP) will be required to have daily access to a computer with internet access. A majority of courses will be on Edgenuity, a web-based program, while other courses may be facilitated by ACCESS, or the teacher will administer a course via Google Classroom. Students will also be required to agree to and sign the VIP Integrity Contract. Students are required to remain on-pace and complete all assignments.

Office Hours

Dothan's Virtual Instruction Program office is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. until 3:30p.m.

Faculty and Staff

Secondary Virtual Program Coordinator: Emily Jackson emjackson@dothan.k12.al.us

Dothan High School Counselor: Michelle Little milittle@dothan.k12.al.us

Dothan Preparatory Counselor: Celeste Morehead cejohnson@dothan.k12.al.us

Contacting Teachers

Students communicate with teachers in four ways:

- A. Electronically completing assignments
- A. E-mailing
- B. Phone (if applicable)
- C. In-Person (if applicable)

Students must take the responsibility to contact the teacher when something is not understood.

Contacting the teacher for additional support or instruction is the responsibility of the student/parent/learning coach. The teacher has 48 hours to respond to the student. If a teacher does not respond within the 48 hour allotted time, the initial email sent to the teacher should be forwarded to the Virtual Instruction Program (VIP) staff to assist with mediation.

If a student is using ACCESS (Alabama Connecting Classrooms, Educators, & Students Statewide) for his/her coursework, the student will be able to email the teacher within the learning management system (ACCESS, Edgenuity). Moreover, the teacher will communicate with individual students through the email system within the learning management system, as well.

If a student is using the district software learning management system, the student will email the designated teacher for the course. Students communicate with the VIP Staff in three ways:

1. E-mail
2. Phone
3. In-Person

Communication is essential in the virtual environment. Because students are not on campus daily for announcements, reading all written communication sent is essential to stay abreast of events that pertain to Dothan City Schools Virtual Program.

Technical Support

Should a student require technical assistance with the ACCESS program, the student can email the ACCESS IT Department.

- Casey Mack cbmack@troy.edu
- Jason Clifford jaclifford@troy.edu

Should a student require technical assistance with INOW Parent Portal, or any other technical concerns, the student can email Angie Love alove@dothan.k12.al.us. Keep in mind DCS office hours (Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.) If a student contacts anyone for technical support after office hours, the student will be contacted the following business day.

Leadership

Teachers for each course are Alabama licensed, highly qualified, and experienced teachers specifically trained in the curriculum and instructional methods for utilizing the online learning management system. Teachers work with students using innovative technology tools.

Curriculum

The curriculum in Edgenuity, the platform to be used for virtual learning, aligns with local, state, and national standards. Courses will be selected to meet 7th and 8th grade courses of study, high school graduation requirements, and the needs of each individual student.

Extra-Curricular

Students who are interested in athletics will be able to participate in an athletic program through their zoned school. Moreover, all athletes must follow the guidelines of the Alabama High School Athletic Association:

- A virtual school student must follow all policies and procedures of the Alabama Department of Education.
- The student-athlete will take the physical education course at the zoned school that is associated with the sport being played, which means attending the class on a daily basis.
- A virtual school student's practice time must be equivalent to but not to exceed practice that of a traditional student during a school day.
- A student must meet the academic eligibility requirements of maintaining a 70 or above average to play a sport. This grade is computed based on 4 core courses and 2 elective courses. Moreover, the average is not rounded.
- A student must have a current physical on file, as well as other documents, with the athletic director.

Students who desire to participate in extracurricular activities will have the option of participating in these activities through their zoned school. If the extracurricular activity requires the student to take a course, the student will be required to take the course at the zoned school, which means attending the class on a daily basis. For example, if a student would like to participate in the JROTC program, the student will have to take the JROTC course at the zoned school.

Academics and Eligibility for Extra-Curricular (Grades 10-12)

Students must have passed during the last two semesters in attendance and summer school, if applicable, at least six (6) new Carnegie units with a minimum composite numerical average of 70 in those six(6) units.

- Four core curriculum courses must be included in those units passed and averaged (English, mathematics, science, and social studies are core curriculum courses. Any combination of these courses is acceptable.)
- Only one unit of physical education per year may be counted.

Enrollment Requirements

- VIP enrollment shall align with the enrollment period of the traditional school program.
- Must maintain consistent, reliable daily access to the Internet, either at their home or other location available to them. **Lack of internet access is not a valid excuse for unsatisfactory progress.**

Dothan City Schools will provide every opportunity for students to achieve in a virtual setting. While a virtual curriculum is suitable for some students, others may experience difficulties, at which point, teachers and administrators will discuss if it is best to recommend a struggling student return to a traditional setting. The safety of your health is important to Dothan City Schools, in addition, we want to ensure the most optimal educational route for students.

- Add/Drop: Students can drop/add VIP classes per the DCS Progression Guide

Procedures.

- After the close of enrollment per the DCS Progression Guide, students in grades 10-12 will remain in the VIP program until the end of each semester; students in grades 7-9 will remain until the end of the grading period.
- Must maintain a record of progress consistent with the pacing guidelines developed for each course, as developed by VIP administration established in the DCS Progression Guide. Failure to do so may result in a recommendation of a change in placement of the student
- Students must adhere to the Dothan City Schools Board of Education's attendance policy and attend class daily in accordance with the adopted Board calendar. Student attendance requirement is met by daily logging in to Edgenuity.
- All VIP students are required (by the Alabama State Department of Education) to participate in the Alabama State Student Assessment Program. These state required assessments i.e. Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP) Summative and Alternate (as applicable) grades 2-8; PreACT grade 10; ACT+Writing grade 11; ACT WorkKeys grade 12; Civics Test grade 12; Alabama ACCESS for ELL grades K-12 (if applicable).
- Students whose education program and pathway is determined by an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) may apply for enrollment. In doing so, Dothan City Schools will follow the guidelines published by the Alabama State Department of Education "Virtual Schools (and Programs) Guidance for Students with Disabilities."
- Students who are learning English through the English Second Language (ESL) program may apply for the VIP. The ESL program will provide translations of the VIP informational documents. An I-ELP (Individualized English Language Plan) will be developed for the student and shared with all teachers and stakeholders. It is strongly recommended that only students with proficiency levels of Expanded, Bridging, or Reaching (WIDA Levels 4-6) enroll in the VIP.

Special Education

To accommodate students who have a disability, we work closely with the DCS Office of Exceptional Student Services. The student's IEP goals and services will be closely monitored by the assigned collaborative teacher.

LINC services will continue. The student's LINC teacher will communicate information, including online instruction times.

RESPONSIBILITIES

DCS Virtual Instruction Teachers

Responsibilities of the teachers shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Serves as liaison between the learning management software (LMS) provider, VIP student, and parents
- Answers any technical problems and/or provides contact information for IT support.
- Maintains weekly communication with students
- Monitors student attendance and academic progress through LMS dashboard.
- Maintains help desk, email address, telephone number, and office hours
- Collects and submits student forms required by VIP
- Retrieves and provides school system with student grades on locally designated dates
- Implements disciplinary procedures outlined in the DCS Code of Conduct

Profile/Responsibilities of a Successful Online Student

A successful virtual school student will possess and/or exhibit the following characteristics:

- Student practices effective study skills and habits.
- Student completes assignments in a timely manner.
- Student completes assignments ethically and honestly.
- Student plans time appropriately to remain current in class activities by logging in and attending to announcements and assignments from the teacher.
- Student responds to instructor feedback on assignments.
- Students must be able to perform basic computer skills such as e-mailing, downloading documents, utilizing the Internet for research and using productivity software (i.e. Microsoft Office)
- Student communicates with instructor (ACCESS) and/or teacher when problems arise.
- Student follows all procedures as set forth by the DCS Code of Conduct when attending classes or extracurricular activities.
- Students are expected to wear an appropriate shirt if the student attends a virtual session. Solid shirts or school spirit shirts are appropriate. Students will dress according to the DCS Code of Conduct while participating in blending learning classes.
- Students must be in an appropriate learning space, ie. kitchen table, quiet room, and sitting upright if participating in a virtual meeting with a teacher. A student may not be in his or her bed.

Responsibilities of the Virtual School Parent/Guardian

The parent/guardian of a VIP student shall work in partnership with the VIP to help his/her child to reach maximum academic potential to achieve academic success. The parent/guardian is responsible to:

- Create and maintain a schedule for instructional time and educational opportunities.
- Ensure his/her child's individual academic needs are met.
- Ensure his/her child is engaged in virtual classes on a regular basis.
- Assist his/her child to maintain academic success.
- Maintain open and frequent communication with instructors.
- Monitor his/her child's academic progress by reviewing grades and responding to electronic communication in a timely manner.

GRADES 7 AND 8 GRADING INFORMATION

Grades

Assignments are graded just like they are in a face-to-face course. Some assignments are graded automatically within the course while the online teacher grades other submitted work. Each assignment's score will be manually entered in INOW while following the Progression Guide's grading weights. The student will receive comments from the teacher on completed assignments. Grades will be updated for the INOW parent portal weekly

Grade Scale

The following scale is used in all public schools in Dothan City Schools:

Letter Grade	Grade (100-point scale)
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59-below

Grading

- All grades must be based on standards and entered into the student information system with a course of study standard number. The testing category will count 60% of the total grade. Minor assessments will count the remaining 40% of the grade.
- All content teachers will administer common assessments as directed by the pacing guide/curriculum guide in Edgenuity.
- All assessments must measure proficiency of standards located in an Alabama Course of Study. Each grading period must include three to five (3-5) summative assessments and seven to nine (7-9) minor assessments (skill checks, projects, presentations, labs, essays, reflection journals) documented in the grade book. The nine weeks assessment will not count toward the number of required (3-5) summative assessments.
- At least one summative assessment must be recorded in the Student Information System (INOW) prior to the grading period progress reports.
- Assessments must be graded and reported to students within five (5) working days.

- Essays and research papers will be returned and recorded to the students within twelve (12) working days.
- A minimum of one critical thinking essay question shall be included on all major (chapter/unit) tests unless otherwise specified in an IEP, 504, or I-ELP.
- The same assessment cannot be used for more than one grade.
- Formative assessments are assignments that are directly considered “practice” for a skill recently taught in the classroom. Formative assessments are used to give the student and teacher feedback. This feedback should be used to drive instruction and identify gaps in learning. Formative assessments will be for reteaching and will not be graded.
- Feedback must be provided for students on formative and summative assessments.
- Bonus points are not allowed.
- Participation and completion grades are not to be given.

Promotion and Retention

A student will be promoted in grades 7 and 8 upon satisfactory completion (minimum of 60% final grade) of Language Arts, math, and science and/or social studies.

Accelerated 7th Grade Mathematics

The Alabama State Department of Education says, “this accelerated pathway is not the default pathway; it should be reserved for those students entering seventh grade who are particularly interested in and motivated to study mathematics throughout high school.” Since this course is designed to challenge even the most proficient math student, each sixth-grade student will take a math screener to help determine the correct placement in seventh-grade math class. Teacher recommendation, as well as sixth-grade math averages, will also contribute to the correct placement in the seventh-grade mathematics course. For the ALSDE math pathway progression chart see page 28 of the Course Description Guide (Appendix I). Consideration will be given regarding the most appropriate screener for limited-English speaking students.

Ensuring Credit

VIP grading policies and procedures follow DCS Board policy on student grading procedures. In order to receive credit for virtual courses, **students are required to take all Midterm Exams and End of the Quarter (Final) exams on campus.** Students must turn in all electronic devices including cell phones or any Internet enabled device to the VIP staff before taking exams. No exam exemptions are allowed for virtual instruction students.

Response to Intervention

● Each teacher will provide Response to Intervention (RTI), review, and/or re-teaching of concepts within the classroom if a student fails a standard. (This is considered tier II intervention). This can be facilitated virtually or another communication method chosen by the teacher.

- Interventions may include meetings with small groups within the classroom or a departmental tutorial.
- Edgenuity allows for two attempts. If after the first attempt, the student fails, reteaching must take place for tests.

MAKE-UP WORK

- Students with excused and unexcused absences will be allowed to make up missed work.
 - o If missed work is graded work, then the student will receive the grade he/she earned.
- Students should make up missed work within (5) school days. Teachers will establish and teach procedures for make-up work. Procedures should be included in the course syllabi.

GRADES 9 - 12 GRADING INFORMATION

Grades

Assignments are graded just like they are in a face-to-face course. Some assignments are graded automatically within the course while the online teacher grades other submitted work. Each assignment's score will be manually entered in INOW while following the Progression Guide's grading weights. The student will receive comments from the teacher on completed assignments. Grades will be updated for the INOW parent portal weekly.

Grading

- All grades assigned must be on grade level content standards unless directed as part of an Individual Education Plan (IEP), 504, and/or ESL plans. Assignments completed by students below grade level can NOT be used as part of the grade.
- All grades must be based on standards and entered into the student information system with a course of study standard number. The testing category for the general classes option will count 60% of the total grade. Minor assessments will count the remaining 40% of the grade; the testing category for the honors option will count 65%, minor assessments will count 35%, and the testing category for the Advanced Placement option will count 70% and minor assessments 30%.
- Major projects will count as a test grade and be graded utilizing a rubric. Rubrics will be distributed to students prior to the project. An exemplary model should be shared with students when the project is assigned to show students what is expected to achieve mastery.
- All assessments must measure proficiency of standards located in an Alabama Course of Study. Each grading period must include three to five (3-5) summative assessments and seven to nine (7-9) minor assessments (skill checks, projects, presentations, labs, essays, reflection journals) documented in the grade book. The grading period assessment will not count toward the number of required (3-5) summative assessments.
- All content teachers will administer common assessments as directed by the pacing guide/curriculum guide in Edgenuity.
- At least one summative assessment must be recorded in the Student Information System (INOW) prior to the grading period progress reports.
- Formative assessments are assignments that are directly considered "practice" for a skill recently taught in the classroom. Formative assessments are used to give the student and teacher feedback. This feedback should be used to drive instruction and identify gaps in learning. Formative assessments will not be graded.
- Assessments must be graded and reported to students within five (5) working days.
- The same assessment cannot be used for more than one grade.
- Essays and research papers will be returned and recorded to the students within twelve (12) working days.
- Feedback must be provided for students on formative and summative assessments.

- All grades must be standards-based with standards clearly designated in the electronic grade book.
- Unit tests will count as a regular assessment.
- All teachers will administer a cumulative assessment each semester which shall be weighted at 20% of that semester grade. Cumulative assessments may be written or performance based.
- Bonus points are not allowed.
- The same assessment cannot be used for more than one grade.
- A minimum of one critical thinking essay question shall be included on all major (chapter/unit) tests unless otherwise specified in an IEP, 504, or I-ELP.
- Participation and completion grades are not to be given.

Ensuring Credit

VIP grading policies and procedures follow DCS Board policy on student grading procedures. In order to receive credit for virtual courses, **students are required to take all Midterm Exams and End of the Quarter (Final) exams on campus.** Students must turn in all electronic devices including cell phones or any Internet enabled device to the VIP staff before taking exams. No exam exemptions are allowed for virtual instruction students.

Response to Intervention

- Each teacher will provide Response to Intervention(RTI), review, and/or re-teaching of concepts within the classroom if a student fails a standard. (This is considered Tier II intervention). This can be facilitated virtually or another communication method chosen by the teacher.
- Interventions may include meetings with small groups within the classroom or a departmental tutorial.
- Edgenuity allows for two attempts. If after the first attempt, the student fails, reteaching must take place for retests.

MAKE-UP WORK

- Students with excused and unexcused absences will be allowed to make up missed work.
 - If missed work is graded work, then the student will receive the grade he/she earned.
- Students should make up missed work within (5) school days. Teachers will establish and teach procedures for make-up work. Procedures should be included in the course syllabi.

THE HIGH SCHOOL CURRENTLY HAS TWO GRADING OPTIONS:

OPTION 1	OPTION 2
GENERAL CLASSES	
<p>60% Summative Common Assessments Examples: unit tests, chapter tests, major projects, major essays, teacher-made tests. <i>* Teacher-made tests will be developed by like content area teachers and all teachers will administer the same assessment.</i></p> <p>40% Minor Assessments Examples: skill checks, projects, presentations, labs, essays, reflection journals.</p>	<p>60% Summative Common Assessments Examples: unit tests, chapter tests, major projects, major essays, teacher-made tests. <i>* Teacher-made tests will be developed by like content area teachers and all teachers will administer the same assessment.</i></p> <p>20% Quizzes 20% Skill Check Examples: projects, presentations, labs, essays, reflection, journals.</p>
HONORS CLASSES	
<p>65% Summative Common Assessments Examples: unit tests, chapter tests, major projects, major essays, teacher-made tests. <i>* Teacher-made tests will be developed by like content area teachers and all teachers will administer the same assessment.</i></p> <p>35% Minor Assessments Examples: skill checks, projects, presentations, labs, essays, reflection journals.</p>	<p>65% Summative Common Assessments Examples: unit tests, chapter tests, major projects, major essays, teacher-made tests. <i>* Teacher-made tests will be developed by like content area teachers and all teachers will administer the same assessment.</i></p> <p>20% Quizzes 15% Skill Check Examples: projects, presentations, labs, essays, reflection, journals.</p>
ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP)	
<p>65% Summative Common Assessments Examples: unit tests, chapter tests, major projects, major essays, teacher-made tests. <i>* Teacher-made tests will be developed by like content area teachers and all teachers will administer the same assessment.</i></p> <p>35% Minor Assessments Examples: skill checks, projects, presentations, labs, essays, reflection journals.</p>	<p>70% Summative Common Assessments Examples: unit tests, chapter tests, major projects, major essays, teacher-made tests. <i>* Teacher-made tests will be developed by like content area teachers and all teachers will administer the same assessment.</i></p> <p>20% Quizzes 10% Skill Check Examples: projects, presentations, labs, essays, reflection, journals.</p>

Grade Scale

The following scale is used in all public schools in Dothan City Schools:

Letter Grade Numerical Percentage

Letter Grade	Grade (100-point scale)	Grade Point Average (4 point scale)
A	90-100	4
B	80-89	3
C	70-79	2
D	60-69	1
F	59-below	0

Grade Point Average

Dothan City Schools uses a weighted scale. Students enrolled in honors classes earn an extra 0.5 grade point for each credit earned. Students enrolled in advanced placement classes and dual enrollment earn an extra 1.0 grade point for each earned.

Regular Courses	Honors Courses	AP Courses	Dual Enrollment
A = 4.0	A = 4.5	A = 5.0	A = 5.0
B = 3.0	B = 3.5	B = 4.0	B = 4.0
C = 2.0	C = 2.5	C = 3.0	C = 3.0
D = 1.0	D = 1.5	D = 2.0	D = 2.0
F = 0	F = 0	F = 0	F = 0

Progress Reports

Progress reports will be administered midpoint for each grading period. Reports will be emailed to the student/parent/guardian. Parents/students have access to the gradebook continuously through the Parent Portal.

Learning Management System

A learning management system (LMS) is a software application for the administration, tracking and delivery of electronic curriculum and instruction. All VIP students will take their coursework through an LMS. VIP will utilize a DCS Board approved purchased software Program (Edgenuity) and ACCESS.

Academic Program Graduation Requirements

The VIP standards and curriculum are designed to prepare students for college and the workforce while providing flexibility in terms of pacing, time, and location. Full-time students are required to take, at a minimum, six (6) credits to eight (8) credits per year. Students must complete the minimum state requirements of twenty-four (24) credits to graduate until 2022. Per the Alabama State Department requirements, credits for graduation will increase to 26 credits beginning with the graduating class of 2023. Students may receive “graduate” status upon meeting all requirements of the Dothan City Schools Board of Education and the Alabama State Department of Education requirements for graduation.

Intervention

Students who are failing to maintain adequate progress in the VIP, may be required to attend on site classes. The VIP teachers will be responsible for assisting the student with academic progress and/or make recommendations for participation in RTI (Response to Instruction) beginning with the PST (Problem Solving Team).

If the student is behind in the course (evident by a consistent lack of attendance/communication), the teacher will communicate directly with the student and parent(s)/guardian to develop a plan for getting the student back on track.

If the student is behind in the course (evident by an increasing lack of attendance/communication and poor academic performance), the VIP teachers/teacher (in collaboration with the VIP Coordinator and the Director of Safety, Security, and Attendance) will send a written notice to the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) concerning the students lack of progress in coursework and/or attendance. Enrollment in the VIP will be discussed.

If the student is behind in coursework (evident by lack of attendance/communication and lack of completed or attempted assignments), teachers in collaboration with the VIP Coordinator will send (upon recommendation of the VIP teachers) an official notification to parent(s)/guardian(s) notifying all parties that the student is truant and in violation of Alabama's Compulsory School Attendance Law. Additionally, the Director of Safety, Security, and Attendance will be notified and will follow DCS policies and procedures for attendance. A recommendation for traditional learning will be made.

Discipline

The Dothan City Schools Student Code of Conduct Handbook provides the rules and regulations that will help students reach their goals. Students are expected to abide by any and all established codes of conduct, board policies, and conduct/behavior as outlined by the student handbook. Consequences for violations of Dothan City Schools policies are found in the Student Code of Conduct. This document is posted on the Dothan City Schools website.

- If students participate in a virtual meeting with teachers, students will be available on time in a quiet location, mute their microphone, maintain visibility on camera, while dressed appropriately, and follow any other directions as communicated by teachers.
- Students must adhere to the DCS Code of Conduct while participating in web-conferencing with teachers and students or risk recommendation of removal from the program.

Program Withdrawal

● If a student has inactivity, without communication or parent conference, the student will be reported to the base school's parental involvement specialist, counselor, or principal in accordance with the virtual instruction coordinator who will follow procedures for attendance outlined by the DCS Office of Safety, Security and Attendance. Based on findings, a student may be withdrawn from the program.

● Failing two or more courses (1 core class or 2 elective classes) at the end of the semester and/or grading period. Follow the DCS Progression Guide.

Student - Parent Agreement Documentation

Parents/Guardians and students MUST sign the VIP contract prior to enrolling.

Email Accounts

All VIP parents/guardian(s) must have an email account. Students must use their DCS email account.

Parents/Guardians and students will receive pertinent information via their email account, and they will be responsible for all communication sent electronically.

Plagiarism

Simply put, plagiarism is using someone else's words and ideas in a paper and acting as though they were your own. This definition includes copying someone else's ideas, graphs, pictures, or anything that you borrow without giving credit to the originator of the words and ideas. It definitely includes anything you download from an Internet site or copy out of a book, a newspaper, or a magazine. It also includes stealing the ideas of another person without giving her or him proper credit.

Some obvious examples of plagiarism include:

- Copying someone else's paper
- Taking short or long quotations from a source without identifying the source
- Turning in a paper you bought or retrieved over the Internet

Some less-obvious examples include:

- Changing a few words around from a book or article and pretending those words are your own
- Rearranging the order of ideas in a list and making the reader think you produced the list
- Borrowing ideas from a source and not giving proper credit to the source
- Turning in a paper from another class

Whether this is plagiarism or not depends on your instructor - ask first!

- Using information from an interview or an online chat or email, etc., without properly citing the source of the information
- Using words that were quoted in one source and acting and citing the original source as though you read it yourself

The ironic thing about committing plagiarism is that most teachers prefer that you use quoted material and properly cite it. They want you to come up with your own ideas in a paper, but will usually give you a good deal of credit for the quality and quantity of outside sources you use as well. (granted permission Copyright 1995-2014, Pearson Education, Inc., publishing as Pearson Prentice Hall Legal and Privacy Terms)

Student Academic Attendance

Attendance in online courses is based on active participation in the learning management system. It is measured not only by logging onto the computer program but also by successfully completing and submitting assignments; participating in course activities such as discussions and projects; and communicating with online teacher(s). Students are to remain active on Edgenuity for four (4) hours daily, twenty (20) hours weekly.