

Independence School District



Virtual Secondary Student/Parent Handbook

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Introduction

This guide has been prepared for parents, guardians, counselors and others who want to help students first decide whether online courses are a good option for them and, if so, how to proceed. In the pages that follow, you will find information about:

- ❖ the characteristics of a successful online learner,
- ❖ how to enroll in online courses and,
- ❖ the impact coursework may have on academics and activities.

Senate Bill 603 At a Glance

In the spring of 2018, SB 603 was passed, thereby expanding the online learning opportunities for students in Missouri. Highlights of this legislation are below.

- The school district must adopt a policy that creates a process for students to enroll in virtual courses and may include consulting with a school counselor.
- The school district must pay for eligible K-12 students to take virtual courses as long as the student: one, resides in the district; two, is currently enrolled in the district and, three, was enrolled full-time in a public school the previous semester. **Exceptions for homeschool students who reside in the district are referenced below in the 'homeschool' student's section of this document.
- School districts are not required to pay for courses beyond full-time enrollment. Therefore, if a student is already enrolled in seven courses in a semester during the regular year (or two courses during the summer school session), the district will not be required to pay for additional courses.
- School districts are able to determine a student's eligibility to enroll in an online course and can refuse enrollment based on 'the best educational interest of the child'. Should the parent disagree with the district's determination, an appeal may be made to the local school board.

Profile of a Successful Online Student

The most important question to answer is whether or not the student is well-suited to be in an online learning environment. Parents and students should be aware that the demands of online courses are equal to or exceed those of traditional 'face to face' courses. Online instruction places much more responsibility on the student. A student should plan to spend at least one hour a day, five days a week, on each course. In other words, at least five hours per week on each course. This is similar to the amount of time a student would spend in a course at the local "brick and mortar" school. Instructors with online teaching experience agree that students who are successful at online learning have the following critical characteristics:

❖ **Good Time Management**

Can the student create and maintain a study schedule throughout the semester without face-to-face interaction with a teacher?

❖ **Effective Communication**

Can the student ask for help, make contact with other students and/or instructors online and describe any problem he/she is having with the learning materials using email?

❖ **Independent Study Habits**

Can the student study and complete assignments without direct supervision and maintain the self-discipline necessary to stick to a schedule?

❖ **Self-Motivation**

Does the student have a strong desire to learn skills, acquire knowledge and fulfill assignments in online courses because of their educational goals?

❖ **Academic Readiness**

Does the student have the basic reading, writing, math and computer literacy skills to succeed in an online course?

❖ **Technologically Prepared**

Does the student know how to open, create and/or save a document, use various technology tools and identify file formats (e.g., doc, xls, pdf, jpg)?

The Stanford Research Institute examined the accessibility of online learning for students, especially those who were at risk of failure. Their report cautions that students who have failed face-to-face classes may have challenges that will affect their success in an online course as well. Many students do not realize that they will have to be even more accountable for their time, performance and productivity in an online class.

Virtual Learning Expectations

Synchronous: Synchronous learning is live teaching time with the teacher. Teachers will provide live instruction with classes during synchronous learning. This instruction will best replicate direct, in class instruction. Synchronous teaching encourages iterating learning.

Asynchronous: Work completed at home, not during live teaching sessions. Students will complete work, at their own pace, typically, through Canvas or Fuel Ed (High School Students Only) during asynchronous learning. Other examples of asynchronous work: reading, writing in a journal, or completing projects. This work is to be completed each school day, as assigned.

The goal of Virtual Learning is to keep children active and engaged so they can learn and grow, while also affording them with meaningful opportunities for connection and community. Teachers will provide opportunities for students to read, write, share ideas, explore, create, play, and move.

On school days, each student will login to Canvas for attendance to be taken. The schedule for learning can be found on the homepage on Canvas. Teachers will schedule live instructional sessions which students will be expected to attend daily. Classroom teachers will check in with individual students at least once per week. As always, faculty and administrators are available via email or phone call if a parent would like to schedule a conversation.

Role of Parents

- Establish routines and expectations for your child.
- Help your child manage online learning by requiring attendance at all classes during the day and having their screen on during all lessons.
- Help your child to plan and turn in work, stay focused and on task.
- Create a comfortable, distraction-free place to work.
- Out of courtesy for others, please ensure that distracting things do not appear on screen during class, such as but not limited to pets, toys, food or other things that detract from the learning environment.
 - Parents and siblings should not appear on screen during class, have conversations, or do things that distract the students from class.
 - No virtual backgrounds on screens.

- Partner with your child's teachers and reach out should any challenges arise.

Role of students

- Give one's best effort and exhibit appropriate online class behavior.
- Attend all scheduled live classes and events for the full period unless a parent or guardian notifies the teacher via email that a child is sick.
- Stay in contact with teachers, with a parent's assistance as needed
- Students are expected to attend live classes with their video and audio ready to turn on and to function as a full participant in each class, contributing to the class dynamic and success of the entire class.
- Come prepared to class with all necessary materials - books, paper, notes, pencil, etc.

Student and Parent Commitments

Student Commitment

By enrolling in virtual courses, Student understands that Student is committing to:

- Receive passing grades in all Core Classes
- Attend small group or 1:1 sessions to support missing skills
- Return to in-person instruction as a result of lack of progress or attendance
- Participate in in-person testing as required by the District
- Actively engage in live lessons or recorded lessons
- Utilize ISD technology appropriately-in accordance with ISD's Student Acceptable Use Policy and all other ISD technology use policies, rules, and requirements at all times

Parent Commitment

By enrolling Student in virtual courses, Parent understands that Parent is committing to:

- Being an active observer to their student's Canvas account to monitor academic progress
- Attending Parent Bootcamp
- Prioritizing that their Student attends daily and completes assigned work
- Ensures that periodic student assessments needing to be completed at the home school are completed
- Engaging in two-way communication with their child's teacher throughout the school year
- Returning ISD technology within communicated timelines. Fees for damage or breakage can be assessed, as necessary

Parent also understands that if Parent has opted to enroll Student in virtual courses, Student will typically remain in virtual courses for the entire semester and will not be permitted to return to in-person courses until the following semester. However, if any of the above Student Commitment requirements are not met during the first 9 weeks of any semester in which Student is enrolled in virtual courses, Student will return to in-person learning immediately following the first nine weeks. Placement in virtual or in-person courses may also be changed pursuant to any student's IEP or Section 504 plan, as indicated below.

Special Services

While the parent/guardian may choose for student to attend school virtually, in every case the IEP team or Section 504 committee of the student (which includes the parent/guardian) is responsible for making the determination of whether virtual education is in the best interest of the student and will confer a FAPE, in student's LRE. Accordingly, a student's IEP team or Section 504 committee may determine that a student's placement in virtual or in-person learning is inadequate to meet the student's needs at any time. This determination may require an immediate change in the student's placement.

Enrollment Procedures and Timeline

In order to enroll in an online course under the provisions of Senate Bill 603, students must be a resident of the Independence School District and be willing to enroll in the district.

To enroll into virtual secondary education, select the appropriate virtual education information for the registration process on the Independence School District website.

Enrollment Timeline

For families interested in virtual enrollment, the Independence School District will adhere to the same timeline outlined in Board Policy/Regulation 6190. "The enrollment period will be ten (10) school days prior to each semester. Students who fail to timely enroll will be permitted to apply the next semester. New students enrolling during the school year will have five (5) school days from school enrollment..." For the 2021-2022 school year the enrollment period for virtual students in the fall semester will be July 7-August 9 and for the spring semester it will be November 29-December 8. If the current enrollment period has passed, then the student will be eligible for virtual enrollment the next semester.

If a virtual student is electing to come back to in-person, here are the timeline windows for this to occur during the school year:

- Secondary virtual students will remain in the virtual model for the entire semester and can move to in-person at the beginning of the upcoming semester.
- If a Secondary virtual student is failing three or more classes, the building can bring the student back to in-person at the end of a quarter.

Scheduling Procedures

Instruction begins as soon as the school day starts. Please check with your child's Canvas page for the daily schedule. Time on task is essential to student success; therefore keeping interruptions to a minimum protects instructional time. We encourage you to help protect instructional time by being sure your child logs in and joins in his/her classroom on time and remains in class until dismissal.

Standardized achievement tests will be administered to students from time to time. Communication will be sent home about testing dates and times. Please help your child do his/her best on the tests by ensuring he/she eats breakfast and receives a good night's sleep prior to the testing day at school. Arriving at class on time is also important. School staff will focus on creating a positive assessment environment to help each student do his/her best. Parents will be provided information on their child's performance on these assessments.

Academic Information

What should students expect during Virtual Learning?

- Each synchronous course will have live instruction lessons each day, Monday-Friday.
- Each lesson will be recorded and posted to the classroom teacher's Canvas page in case your student missed the lesson or needs to review the lesson.
- Each student can access the instruction lessons through the classroom teacher's Canvas page.
- Additional tutoring sessions will be provided by the classroom teacher. The teacher will communicate these tutoring times to their classes. The parent and student are also encouraged to reach out to the teacher if they are needing to know upcoming tutoring days/times.

Canvas:

- Where you find your online class, assignments, and submit work.
- All students' Asynchronous work will be posted through Modules on Canvas.
- Students should complete Canvas work daily.
- Where you will attend virtual classes via live instruction.

Fuel Ed (High School Students Only):

- The ISD is using Canvas and FuelEd for all virtual learning resources. High School students may be enrolled in both Canvas and FuelEd classes for core and elective coursework.
- To login to your FuelEd account:
 1. Visit www.getfueled.com
 2. Click "Login" in the top right corner.
 - Your username is your ISD student ID number.
 - Your password is your date of birth, using the first three letters of your birth month, two digit day and four digit year. For example, if your birthday is June 2, 2003, your FuelEd password is Jun022003. Be sure to capitalize the first letter of your birth month.
 3. Once you login, you will see the FuelEd courses you are currently enrolled in. Click on a course icon to access that course.
- Watch [this video \(https://youtu.be/JYmAXs9f7S0\)](https://youtu.be/JYmAXs9f7S0) to learn more about navigating your FuelEd account.
- ISD families can call 816-521-5553 or email helpme@isdschools.org with questions about Chromebooks, Canvas, FuelEd, admissions, and other academic needs. Families can also use the Inbox in Canvas to email questions about course navigation and assignments to their classroom teachers(s).

Transferring to In-person

If a virtual student is electing to come back to in-person, here are the timeline windows for this to occur during the school year:

- Secondary virtual students will remain in the virtual model for the entire semester and can move to in-person at the beginning of the upcoming semester.
- If a Secondary virtual student is failing three or more classes, the building can bring the student back to in-person at the end of a quarter.

Attendance / Participation

REGULAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IS NECESSARY (Board Policy and Regulation 2310).

“The Board of Education believes that regular attendance is essential to achieving success in school. Education is a total process based upon continual communication and shared responsibilities among parents, students, teachers and school. As students mature and progress through the educational system, they should increasingly assume responsibility for regular attendance. However, parents have a legal and moral responsibility to require regular attendance at school”.

Excessive absences from school and/or lack of participation has a negative impact on a student’s academic progress, social, and emotional growth. If your child is going to be absent from virtual participation for any length of time, please contact your home school secretary to inform them for attendance purposes.

The following guidelines will be used to address absenteeism and lack of participation:

- When students are absent for three days from virtual participation, a call from the student’s instructor can be expected.
- When a student is absent for five days from virtual participation, families can expect to receive an attendance letter from the home school and opportunities for attendance interventions.
- When a student is absent for nine days from virtual participation, families will receive a second attendance letter. Other options for interventions may include case management from a family school liaison, homebound services, or additional building-level interventions supported by the Problem Solving Team.
- When a student is absent for fifteen days from virtual participation, families will receive a third attendance letter. The homeschool administrator will review an in-person participation plan with the student and family. Additional measures, such as referral to truancy court or a referral to child protective protective services, may be utilized.
- In accordance to Board Policy/Regulation 6190 - “District students enrolled full-time in program courses are not permitted to attend or participate in various non curricular, extracurricular, and/or interscholastic activities and athletics, including graduation ceremonies, dances, etc. Students enrolled full-time in program courses may be allied to attend graduation ceremonies if they complete District in-person instruction and seat time requirements set forth by the District and upon a written request form the student to the Superintendent”.

Getting Started

Prior to Day 1

- You will pick up your chrome book at your home school and be sure you can log in.

- Log in Canvas to This will include Canvas training.
- You may access training videos on the Canvas section of the ISD website (<https://www.isdschools.org/independence-school-district-canvas/>).
- Make sure your chromebook is charged and ready to go.
- Parents must pair with Canvas before the first day of school.
- Learn how to check your Canvas inbox.

Day 1

- Log into Canvas (and Fuel Ed for high school students)
- Review introduction announcements or instructions for all courses.
- Meet your teachers and classmates.
- Complete assignments.

Day-to-Day

- Start everyday by checking your Canvas inbox.
- Look at any recent feedback given from your teacher.
- Attend live instruction each day.
- Check the calendar for due dates each day.
- Keep working on the next assignments in your module.

Additional Support

- Students can message teachers through the inbox feature in Canvas. Teachers may use this to reach the student as well. Typical response time is 24 hours.
- Announcements are posted weekly on the course homepage and provide information for the week including the teacher's office hours.
- Teachers will offer tutoring times for students needing additional support. This is a time for students to receive immediate feedback from teachers
- Teachers will schedule daily office hours.
- GradeGuardian notifications for Canvas classes will be sent weekly to parents if a student is inactive or not completing work.

Virtual Protocols

Parent / Guardian Expectations

- Parents / guardians will need to be actively involved in helping launch, support and monitor your student's learning using a virtual platform.
- Consistent access to the internet will be critical to this form of instruction and learning. Equally important will be your student's regular participation with the teacher and virtual learning materials provided in the online learning management system.
 - ISD strongly recommends checking out the Chromebook the district provides to assist your student with ease of access in online learning.
- Go to www.isdschools.org to set up your parent Canvas account access prior to your student starting. Help your student understand how to access their Canvas account from the resources provided.
- Communicating with your student's teacher should be done via email through the Canvas platform.
- Be sure to go over these protocols for being a virtual learner with your student and adhere to the expectations.

Student Expectations

- Instruction can be delivered through Canvas or Fuel Ed (high school students only). All directions and expectations for student learning will be posted as weekly modules. Families are responsible for checking the learning platform(s) daily throughout the week and for being especially attentive to correspondence from the teacher.
- To be counted present, students must log out and then log back into Canvas **one time per school day through the Canvas website**, not the mobile app. Students will also need to log into each class assigned to them and complete the work in order to be counted present for each class.
- Attendance, participation, engagement, and understanding will all be monitored through submitted work and active time within the Canvas system. Students who are not submitting work by due dates will be contacted and could be considered "absent."
- Work will be self-paced and guided by deadlines as designated by the teacher. Learning tasks may be assigned and due in "chunks" to allow students to work through the material at their own pace. However, families should pay attention to the deadlines set by teachers. All assignments will be submitted in Canvas. If for any reason you have trouble uploading your assignments, please contact your teacher via Canvas email or during designated office hours.
- High school students with Fuel Ed classes are expected to self-pace throughout the material. Students will be up to two Fuel Ed classes at a time. Once a Fuel Ed class is completed, then another class can be added. Fuel Ed course work will not be accepted beyond the end of the school day of the last day of the semester.
- Grading expectations remain the same as for an in-person learner and progress reports will be available on the same district schedule for issuance.

Video Conferencing Etiquette

- Log in to the video conferencing software prior to meeting time.
- Ensure microphones and cameras are working.
- Camera must be turned on.

- Turn off the microphone unless you are participating in a discussion.
- The background of your video should be free of distractions.
- Students should stay seated during instruction.
- If a student continues to disrupt the live session, the teacher can remove the student from the session. If this is the case, the teacher will send a follow up communication to the parent notifying them of the issue and letting them know the student can access the recorded session through Canvas to complete the assignment.
- If the student is a constant disruption during direct instruction opportunities (student has had to be removed from the direct instruction sessions on three or more occasions), the Principal will reach out to work with the family to develop a plan for success.
- It is always important to be a positively contributing member of any live learning session. Inappropriate behavior can result in only being able to access the recorded sessions, as determined by the administrator.

Preparing the Learning Environment: Parent and Student

- Dedicate a space in the home as a “learning space.” This can be any space with room to work and store materials that won’t be disrupted for the duration of learning.
- Have a timer available for students to set for each block of time to help manage daily learning. Discuss acceptable options if a student needs a break before the timer goes off, such as getting a glass of water or taking a movement break.

Learning Expectations

- Teachers will provide activities/assignments that are developmentally appropriate. Each day, there will be content-specific activities students can work through to build background for the live sessions offered by the teacher. In addition, there will be self-paced learning activities to complete and submit that will help prepare your child for ongoing learning. Feedback will be given, as appropriate, for completed work.
- Virtual learning time for secondary students should be about 4-6 hours each school day during the regular school year.
 - Live sessions will be about 30 min per content area throughout the day
 - Additional independent work time will be provided for additional learning activities and practice of skills in content areas.

Teacher Availability / Office Hours:

- Teachers will set time (office hours) to be available for questions or clarification. Please see the teacher’s schedule for available office hours.
- The teacher will run office hours remotely by making a virtual room active where students / families come and leave as needed.

Academic Dishonesty

Grades in secondary school are used to measure student mastery of skills so the teacher knows how to plan for instruction and meet student needs. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and consequences will be

issued if a student is not submitting their original work.

In-Person Assessments

Families will be required to bring their students to a school site to participate in standardized assessments such as district unit assessments, classroom-based screening assessments and the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) or End-of-Course (EOC) exams. These will be scheduled based on the ISD assessment calendar and will be communicated with families by the teacher and home school.

SPECIAL SERVICES

IEP and 504

Virtual instructors are trained in accommodating students' needs. Your student's home school Case Manager or Counselor will email your student's IEP or 504 to the virtual teacher, and accommodations will be made accordingly. Special education services will be determined by the student's IEP team. Please work with your student's home building to schedule an IEP meeting.

English Learners

Students may attend EL classes at designated sites. Please work with your home school administrator to determine your student's attendance schedule.

Gifted-IMPACT

Qualified students may attend IMPACT classes at the designated site. Please work with your home school administrator and the IMPACT teachers to determine your student's attendance schedule.

School Athletics and Activities

Secondary virtual students may not participate in site-based clubs and activities on school campuses. Virtual students may attend evening events with parent supervision.

In accordance to Board Policy/Regulation 6190 - "District students enrolled full-time in program courses are not permitted to attend or participate in various non curricular, extracurricular, and/or interscholastic activities and athletics, including graduation ceremonies, dances, etc. Students enrolled full-time in program courses may be allied to attend graduation ceremonies if they complete District in-person instruction and seat time requirements set forth by the District and upon a written request form the student to the Superintendent".

Summer School

Virtual options for secondary students will not be offered during summer school. All virtual students are

welcome to attend in-person summer school sessions.

Technology & School Supplies

Secondary virtual students will be issued a chromebook through the district. The chromebook will meet the technology requirements for any online course taken through the virtual program. The district can help provide internet access upon request based on need; please contact your home school Family School Liaison for support. Coursework will be hosted on Canvas, an Interactive Learning Management System.

Families may want to provide the following technology for virtual learners:

- Mouse
- Headphones

Supplies that students will need access to provided by families: ([ISD School Supply Lists](#))

- Paper
- Notebooks
- Crayons
- Etc.

The district will provide the following supplies based on grade level for check-out: (*insert supplies*)

- Math manipulatives
- White boards
- Etc.

ISD families can call 816-521-5553 or email helpme@idschools.org with questions about Chromebooks, Canvas, FuelEd, admissions, and other academic needs. Families can also use the Inbox in Canvas to email questions about course navigation and assignments to their classroom teachers(s).

Final Advice for Parents

Throughout the student's enrollment in the online course, it is best practice to do the following:

- Set up a study space, including technology required.
- Communicate regularly with the classroom teacher.
- Be prepared for any technical issues that may come up.
- Define expectations for when and where your student will work on the course.
- Agree on incentives and consequences.
- Reinforce that online courses are as important as face-to-face courses and do become a part of the student's educational record.
- See that your student establishes a routine for working on his/her online course(s).
- Help your student maintain a regular study schedule.
- Actively monitor your student's progress.

Additional Policies and Procedures

Additional policies and procedures can be found in the following student handbooks:

- [MS Student Handbook](#)
- [HS Student Handbook](#)

Contacts

The first point of contact with questions regarding your student's learning experience will always be your student's teacher.

Find your students' home school contacts here: <https://www.isdschools.org/our-schools/>. The home school secretary will be able to assist you with contacting other staff in the building.

Technical Assistance: 816-521-5553 Email: helpme@isdschools.org (Be sure to include your student's name, grade and that your student is a virtual learner to ensure prompt assistance)

Additional questions beyond what school staff may be able to answer should be directed to the Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education: Dr. Randy Maglinger 816-521-5300

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Notice for Directory Information

The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that the **Independence School District #30**, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However the **Independence School District #30** may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the **Independence School District #30** to the contrary in accordance with the **Independence School District #30** procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the **Independence School District #30** to include information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent. [Note: These laws are Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. § 7908) and 10 U.S.C. § 503(c).]

If you do not want the **Independence School District #30** to disclose any or all of the types of information designated below as directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the **Independence School District #30** in writing by **September 15th** (students new to the district after this date may submit the request up to two weeks after admission). The **Independence School District #30** has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended
- Student ID number, user ID, or other unique personal identifier used to communicate in electronic systems but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user
- A student ID number or other unique personal identifier that is displayed on a student ID badge, but only if the identifier cannot be used to gain access to education records except when used in conjunction with one or more factors that authenticate the user's identity, such as a PIN, password, or other factor known or possessed only by the authorized user.