

Spring 2021



Virtual Learning Program Handbook

**Sequatchie County Schools
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Sequatchie County Schools: Virtual Learning Program Handbook

Introduction

This handbook gives general guidance for parents and students enrolled in the Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program. The Virtual Learning Program is a public school and is subject to the rules and regulations of the Tennessee Department of Education. Sequatchie County Schools' Virtual Learning Program follows the Sequatchie County Schools' academic calendar.

Sequatchie County Schools' Virtual Learning Program's Mission Statement

Sequatchie County Schools' Virtual Learning Program offers accessible, computer-based, nontraditional learning opportunities for students.

Connect

School, community, and clubs

Customize

Your learning, your location, and ability

Complete

Grade progression and high school credits

Admission and Entrance Requirements

Participating in Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program means students:

- are currently residing in Sequatchie County, Tennessee (proof of residence required for newly enrolled students);
- are simultaneously enrolled in the Sequatchie County School System as a K-12 student;
- agree to actively participate in Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program environment;
- understand that you must work independently and are responsible for completing assignments and tasks; and
- must commit to a minimum of one semester of virtual learning.

Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Academy reserves the right to restrict access to any student. The student and the students' guardians will be counseled as to the best program to meet their educational needs.

The student and the student guardian will need access to the following items to be successful in completion of the Remote/Virtual Learning Option:

- A working printer
- A laptop computer or desktop computer (computer loans are available for Spring 2021 students)
- The Google Chromebook Operating System download
- Stable Internet connection

School Community Connections

It is the goal of Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program to foster a sense of community for our families during the school year. In an effort to help families build more meaningful relationships with one another, Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program offers both school-based connections with your local school and online connections.

Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program is delighted to provide collaboration and social networking at your local school. You will find information about these opportunities by web messenger, as well as announcements on the school website.

Clubs and Athletics

Students participating in Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program are permitted to participate in Sequatchie County Schools Athletic Programs. Please note that your student athlete must comply with school policies and TSSAA regulations when participating in school clubs and athletics.

Students that would like to participate in clubs that are participating in Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program will be given the opportunity to join the club through a video chat option given by the teacher or host of the club.

Standards of Participation

Each student enrolled in Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program is solely responsible for the content posted through his/her login and account activity. Sharing your username and password with others and using other's usernames and passwords are strictly prohibited.

The following are also strictly prohibited:

- posting personally identifiable information in any format other than a private message;
- antagonism or prejudice of any kind with respect to race, religion, gender, intelligence, age, orientation, disability, or socioeconomic status;
- posting material such as language, photographs, and videos that are inappropriate;
- any criminal or other illegal activity, including encouraging the unlawful use, possession, manufacture, or distribution of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol;
- illegally posting, distributing, uploading, or downloading copyrighted work (whether music, video, words, images, drawings, paintings, software, or otherwise);
- sharing assignments, quizzes, tests, assessments, essays, term papers, questions/answers, or any other action that would violate any code of conduct, expectations, or rules in regards to academic honesty;
- spam or unauthorized, unsolicited, commercial promotion; and

- disruptions of the server or host software.

Failure to comply with these standards may result in temporary or permanent removal of user access to Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program.

Dress Code

While participating in an online class where other students and a teacher are present, students should follow the respective school's dress code. When students are completing work independently, there is no dress code.

Attendance Policy

Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program is designed and intended to be a virtual learning environment. Instruction is primarily computer-based. Therefore, students can work anywhere there is an internet connection.

Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program requires that students work in their online courses daily. Student progress will be monitored closely. Although flexibility in choosing instructional times is a huge advantage to virtual school, students must maintain their progress in all courses.

Full-time virtual students must meet attendance requirements. The Virtual Learning Program will track absentees daily. A student will be reported to truancy upon accruing excessive absences according to Sequatchie County Schools' Attendance Policy. Once reported to truancy, a conference will be requested with the parent and student to determine future outcomes for the student's educational needs.

- Students are required to work in their courses every school calendar day to be counted present for daily attendance.
- Students must work a minimum of 4 hours, or 240 minutes, per day.
- Students must work a minimum of 5 hours, or 300 minutes, in each course per week.
- If a student has completed ALL courses, absentee will not be counted.

Attendance Policy (continued)

Note: If a student will not be working in their courses, a parent or guardian should notify Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program by phone or email.

Inactivity can be approved provided that student progress is satisfactory in all courses. Extended periods of inactivity, coupled with unsatisfactory student progress, may be considered grounds for removal from the Virtual Learning Program and/or truancy proceeding. If a student participates in the Remote/Virtual learning program, and does not log into the platform everyday for the first 10 school days, the student may be considered for removal from the Remote/Virtual Learning Option.

Finally, students participating in Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program will be required to come in for certain district and state-mandated testing. For all these mandatory attendance events, timely transportation to and from Sequatchie County Schools must be provided by the parent/guardian.

In the case of unsatisfactory student progress, Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program staff will attempt to schedule and provide assistance to the student. In cases where students are not taking advantage of the help offered, we reserve the right to require a student to come in for assistance in order to continue to participate in the program.

It is our hope that students will find the virtual learning environment inviting, supportive, and helpful. Parents and students are welcome to email anytime or call during office hours to talk to our teachers and administrators. In addition to the excellent instructional support available through the online courses, our teachers will offer resources for enrichment and preparation for district and state tests.

Retakes

Each teacher will have discretion over their personal retake policy for assignments. This retake policy will be communicated through a syllabus given at the beginning of each semester.

Extension of Courses

An extension of courses will only be granted on a case-by-case basis. Students must adhere to the school calendar and school deadlines when completing online courses. A cost to extend the course may be required to be covered by the student's family or guardians.

Withdrawal From a Virtual Course

Students will not be able to withdraw from a virtual course. Students must complete a minimum of one semester in the Virtual Learning Program. After this time period, a student who does not wish to complete their courses online will have the opportunity to withdraw from virtual learning to go back to the traditional/blended-ready learning environment. If a student does not complete a course, the course remains dormant, or less than 80% of the coursework is completed, the student may receive an F in the course, and/ or will not be allowed to take any further virtual courses.

Integrity in Scored Assignments and Assessments

A great strength of virtual instruction is the abundance of real-time assistance available to the student. **We encourage help from family, friends, online teachers, our own staff, etc. However, when an assignment is scored, we expect the work to be the student's alone so that the score is meaningful.** Scored assignments and assessments are important because they give us information about student progress and the effectiveness of instruction.

Integrity in Scored Assignments and Assessments (continued)

All scored assignments and assessments are assumed to be the student's original work, regardless of where the work is completed. Each student in the Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program is expected to honor the following guidelines while completing scored assignments and assessments. The student will:

- complete assignments and/or assessments alone;
- not copy or redistribute any part of the assignments and/or assessments in any way—electronically, verbally, or on paper;
- take the assessments without any aids—meaning you may not use textbooks, references, or other materials (printed or electronic), unless your teacher or the specific assessment otherwise instructs you to;
- not be allowed to use their own personal notes to take quizzes, tests, and exams (no screenshots or previous quizzes/tests);
- not log in to a second course or open course-related materials on another browser on another device; and
- not confer with others (students, family members, teachers, or acquaintances) either in person or through electronic communication during assessments.

An Integrity Policy will need to be signed by the student, parent/guardian, and supervising adult. Unit tests and exams will be proctored to protect integrity and test confidentiality. Consequences for failure to meet the Academic Integrity Policy are as follows:

- 1st offense: The student will be counseled at the school level with parent/guardian. The student will be given a second chance to complete the assignment.
- 2nd offense: The student will be counseled at the school level with parent/guardian. Disciplinary actions may result. An alternative assignment will be given.

Integrity in Scored Assignments and Assessments (continued)

- 3rd offense: The student will be counseled at the school level with parent/guardian. Disciplinary actions will result. The student will be given a zero on the assignment.
- 4th offense: The student will be counseled at the school level with parent/guardian. Disciplinary actions will result. The student will be given a zero on the assignment. The student will no longer be eligible for enrollment in virtual courses offered by Sequatchie County Schools.

State Testing

Students participating in Sequatchie County Schools' Virtual Learning Program will be required to meet in state testing requirements from the Tennessee State Department of Education. In order to participate in this testing, students must be on campus to take these tests. The Instructional Technology Specialist will work with the school guidance counselors and testing facilitators to fulfill these requirements and communicate these requirements to students, parents, and guardians.

Notification of Grades and Student Progress

Parents and students are able to review grades and percent completion of courses at all times using the online course dashboard. Village Virtual will send progress reports via email. Therefore, the Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program staff will not print and mail quarterly progress reports. If you would like one, a formal request in writing will be needed. Only the final course grades will be provided upon completion of each course.

Grade Determination

Final grades will be determined based on 100-point scoring. Grading will follow the Sequatchie County Schools Uniform Grading Scale and Policies:

A=100-93

B=92 - 85

C=84 - 75

D=74 - 70

F=69 - 0

Please note: Grades Kindergarten through Fourth will not receive letter grades on a numerical scale. They receive report cards with standards-based grading. Their grading scale is as follows:

A=Mastery

B=Mastery

C=Partial Mastery

D=Partial Mastery

F=Not Mastery

Please note: if a student does not complete and return an assignment within a week of the suggested due date, a zero will be entered for the assignment until the assignment is completed.

Student Records

Student records will be maintained, as with any other student enrolled in Sequatchie County Schools. If you move out of the county, the school that your student enrolls in will send a records request to Sequatchie County Schools and the records will be sent according to school board policy.

Grade Promotion and Awarding Credit

Course credit will be given to a student who earns an A, B, C, or D. If a student earns a failing grade of an F, he/she will not receive credit for the course. Refer to the SCHS Handbook for information on credit recovery options for high school students.

Graduation

Any student wishing to graduate and “walk” with their local classmates must complete all course work at least 10 days prior to graduation. All additional requirements set forth by the Sequatchie County School Board and the State of Tennessee Department of Education must be met.

Academic Awards

Because of the flexible nature of online virtual instruction, it is not practical to make academic roll designations until courses are completed. We will use final grades to determine academic rolls and end-of-year awards.

High school students participating in online virtual instruction will also be considered for top 10 honors awards. Requirements for traditional schooling and virtual schooling will be the same to achieve this. Students must have the highest GPAs in their class by the fall of their senior year. Their performance in the coursework must also meet math and science requirements. Students must take one of the following math courses to be considered for top 10 honors:

- Statistics
- Calculus AB

Students must take the following science course to be considered for top 10 honors:

- Physics

Computer Loans

Students will be loaned a laptop by Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program. Additional assistive technology will be provided to students who have a current Individualized Education Plan that requires additional assistive technology. Students and parents of the student receiving a Chromebook from Sequatchie County Schools will be required to sign a device agreement. A Chromebook will not be issued unless the agreement is signed. Insurance can be purchased through

Sequatchie County Schools for a cost of \$25.00. Insurance for Chromebooks will not be granted after the student receives the Chromebook.

If a Chromebook or device loaned by Sequatchie County Schools is broken or damaged, this is required to be communicated to the Information Technology team located at The Sequatchie County Board of Education at (423) 949-3617,

Computer Loans (continued)

If a Chromebook or device was damaged and did not have insurance coverage, the student will not be allowed to receive another Sequatchie County School Chromebook or device until the price of the damaged device is paid in full.

Special Education

Special education services are available to students identified as having a disability. This program is considered an inclusion program. The student's home is the "regular" classroom. Services are provided by phone, email, and online. Services offered may include adaptations and modifications to the general education curriculum, specialized instructional strategies, and adjustments in pacing. Other related services will be provided by a Sequatchie County Schools certified special education teacher.

- When registering your child with the Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program, please notify us of any special education/504 services your child has been receiving at their home-based school.

504 Students

504 services are available to students with Individualized Assistance Plans (IAP). Services are provided by phone, email, and online. Services offered may include accommodations.

- When registering your child with the Sequatchie County Schools Virtual Learning Program, please notify us of any special education/504 services your child has been receiving at their home-based school.

Student Conduct

Students should realize that taking a course online requires personal discipline and good time management skills. Students should not expect that there will be less to do than in the regular classroom since each course must adhere to the Tennessee standards and benchmarks for the area of instruction. Most people agree that students dedicate more time to online courses than they typically devote to traditional high school classes. Students should consult their school guidance counselor and on-site facilitator to make sure that they are ready for online learning. Computer expertise is not required; however, students should be aware that a certain level of computer skill and comfort is necessary to do work online.

Student Responsibilities:

- **Indicate interest by attending an informational session**
- **Work with staff at the school and the parent/guardian to determine whether the desired online course is appropriate**
- **Complete and submit the Virtual/Remote Program Registration Forms to the on-site facilitator**
- **Read and review the Virtual Letter of Agreement document with a parent/guardian and complete the Virtual Academic Integrity Policy form if the school approves the request**
- **Turn the completed forms in to the on-site or lab facilitator**
- **Review the enrollment welcome email and log in to the online course**
- **Complete the online orientation module and/or attend the face-to-face orientation**
- **Review the course expectations and course calendar with your lab facilitator.**
- **Set up a regularly scheduled class period and a dedicated computer to use during the class day**

Disclaimer: If the student does not complete the list of responsibilities listed above, or log in daily, make consistent progress on coursework,

respond to emails or phone calls, the student could be asked to return to the traditional learning option.

Parent Responsibilities:

- **Work with staff at the school to determine whether the desired online course is appropriate for your child**
- **Review and sign the Student Enrollment Request form**
- **Review and sign the Letter of Agreement document and the Academic Integrity Policy form if the school approves the request**
- **Turn the completed forms into the Instructional Technology Specialist**
- **If the course will be accessed from home, help to determine that the home computer meets the technical requirements of the course**
- **Complete the parent online orientation module or attend the face-to-face orientation (if applicable)**
- **Communicate with staff at the school and Instructional Technology Specialist as appropriately needed**

Disclaimer: The parent or guardian will be held responsible for ensuring that their student in the Remote/Virtual Learning Program is completing coursework, checking grades daily, etc. The parent or guardian is heavily encouraged to sit with the student during the school day to offer support and guidance when completing coursework. If the parent or guardian is not available to assist with these responsibilities, and does not respond to communication from teachers or school personnel, the student may be asked to return to the traditional learning option.

Online Instructor Responsibilities:

Under the coordination of the Instructional Technology Specialist, the instructor is responsible for the success of students taking an online course under their supervision. Duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Identify, select, and modify instructional resources to meet the needs of students with varying backgrounds, learning styles, and special needs**
- **Regularly interact with students and parents via email, instant message, threaded discussion, synchronous chat, phone conversations, and web conferencing**
- **Grade student work and post student assignments to be completed**
- **Provide constructive and detailed feedback to help students achieve academic success**
- **Respond to student questions within one business day and provide feedback on assignments within seven business days of receipt**
- **Actively monitor and track individual student progress and provide remediation and direction as needed**
- **Maintain effective and efficient record-keeping procedures**
- **Provide a positive environment in which students are encouraged to be actively engaged in the learning process**
- **Demonstrate and sustain expertise in the specific course that he or she is assigned to teach**
- **Adhere to course objectives by making use of the approved curriculum and electronic/web resources**
- **Maintain consistency in grading and evaluation procedures**
- **Provide timely posting of course content**
- **Keep archives of student work and correspondences**
- **Contact each student to welcome him or her to the course**

- **Monitor end dates to ensure students are staying on track in the course, and proactively contact the student, parent/guardian, and Instructional Technology Specialist if concerns arise**
- **Provide useful information to students to support success in each course, including a complete syllabus or pacing guide, course policies, grading policies, contact information, and other appropriate information as needed**