

ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS - ONLINE LEARNING PROGRAM

In order to support the diverse needs of Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) students, ACPS provides online learning courses (online courses that complement in-person instruction) and the ACPS Virtual Academy (a fully virtual school program) (Virtual) to ACPS students.

Definitions:

Online Learning - taking a course or series of courses online. Online learning may consist of individual online courses or a fully virtual learning program.

Online Courses - individual courses that are taken online

ACPS Virtual Academy (Virtual Academy) - a fully online school program

ACPS Online Learning Program (OLP) - the organizational unit which oversees ACPS's online courses and the ACPS Virtual Academy

Online Courses

Online courses may be taken during either the school day or after school and complement a student's in-person instruction. The following guidelines should be used when determining if an online course is appropriate.

- Online courses are designed to supplement in-person instruction. Online courses are typically taken when an in-person option is not available, would not fit in the student's schedule, or is necessary to meet graduation requirements.
- As a best practice, it is recommended that students should enroll in no more than two online courses per term during the regular school year. Exceptions must be approved by the OLP and the principal.
- Online courses must be academically appropriate for the student.
- Students, families, school leaders, and counselors should refer to the "*Profile of a Successful Online Student*" guidelines, available on the ACPS website, when considering if an online course is appropriate for a student.

All Virginia students are required to take an online course as part of their high school graduation requirements.

There is no minimum GPA required to enroll in an online course.

Only online courses and online course providers approved through the OLP are eligible for enrollment and academic credit.

The availability of certain courses may change from time-to-time during the school year depending upon provider availability.

47 Online courses are reflected in the transcript in the same manner as in-person courses.

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49 **Virtual Academy**

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51 Some students may benefit from participation in the fully online Virtual Academy for many
 52 reasons including but not limited to health concerns, balancing school and work, or to meet
 53 graduation requirements. Full-time virtual students remain ACPS students, remain tied to their
 54 base schools, and are expected to complete the school year virtually unless the school determines
 55 that returning to in-person instruction is in the student's best interest academically.

56

57 Only full-time ACPS students are eligible to enroll in the Virtual Academy.

58

59 Virtual Academy instruction is provided in the following formats:

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- 61 ● Grades K-5 - Synchronous instruction
- 62 ● Grades 6-12 - Asynchronous instruction
- 63 ● All Virtual Academy students may request a meeting with their teacher for additional
 64 support.

65 The following guidelines should be used when determining if enrollment in the Virtual Academy
 66 is appropriate.

67

- 68 ● Appropriate support is available for the student (students in the Virtual Academy
 69 frequently require more support from families than students in the in-person program.)
- 70 ● The Virtual Academy must be academically and socially/emotionally appropriate for the
 71 student.
- 72 ● Students, families, school leaders, and counselors should refer to the “*Profile of a
 73 Successful Virtual Student*” guidelines, available on the ACPS website, when considering
 74 if enrollment in the Virtual Academy is appropriate for a student.

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76 Enrollment in the Virtual Academy must be requested by the family and renewed annually.

77

78 **Costs**

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80 ACPS students are not charged tuition for enrolling in any online course or in the Virtual Academy
 81 offered by the school division during the regular school year. However, tuition may be charged for
 82 summer school programs at the same rate as in-person course offerings.

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84 **Supports**

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86 Students enrolled in online courses or the Virtual Academy frequently require organizational
 87 support. This support is best provided as a collaboration between the family and ACPS.

88

89 ACPS assigns a mentor to all students enrolled in an online course or the Virtual Academy to
 90 support their course progress and completion.

91

92 Students experience the greatest success when families and the mentor collaborate to encourage
 93 students to meet course deadlines, help the student to set manageable and consistent progress goals,
 94 and adjust goals depending on their needs.

95
 96 Students enrolled in online courses or in the Virtual Academy are provided unrestricted access to
 97 the student help desk for technical issues.

- 98
- 99 ● While students may access their online course at a time and place outside of the regular
 100 school day, ACPS is not responsible for ensuring that non-division non-district computers
 101 meet the minimum technical specifications.

102

103 **Drops**

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105 In some situations a student may determine an online course is not appropriate.

- 106
- 107 ● Students may withdraw from their online course within the first 10 calendar days of course
 108 activation for any reason without academic penalty.
 - 109 ○ Students enrolled in the Virtual Academy may drop individual courses within this
 110 timeframe, but may not withdraw from the Virtual Academy.
- 111 ● A student who requests to drop an online course (or is administratively withdrawn for non-
 112 performance) after 10 calendar days of course activation will receive a grade of W/P
 113 (withdraw passing) if they are passing the course at the time of the drop or a W/F (withdraw
 114 failing) if they are failing the course at the time of the drop.

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116 **Roles**

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118 Student success in online learning and the Virtual Academy is dependent on close collaboration
 119 between ACPS and families, with each individual performing their role.

120

121 **Student**

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123 The student is responsible for participating in determining if online courses or the Virtual
 124 Academy is appropriate, completing all assignments and seeing needed assistance from the
 125 family, teacher, and/or mentor. The student should:

- 126
- 127 ● maintain a steady pace of submission of assignments as set forth by their online
 128 teacher;
- 129 ● maintain open communication with their online teacher and mentor;
- 130 ● complete all course work and required assessments; and
- 131 ● meet all deadlines.

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133 Failure to actively engage in the online course may result in the student being withdrawn
 134 from the course.

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136 **Family**

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138 The student’s family is responsible for participating in determining if online courses or the
 139 Virtual Academy are appropriate, assisting the student with organization and encouraging
 140 the student to seek needed support from the teacher.

141
 142 **The ACPS Online Learning Program**

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 144 The ACPS OLP is the division program responsible for the oversight, distribution, and
 145 quality assurance of online learning opportunities for ACPS students. The OLP:

- 146
- 147 ● Oversees the approval, distribution, and establishes quality assurance guidelines for
- 148 all online learning options made available by ACPS.
- 149 ● Provides schools with information regarding how the Virtual Academy may serve
- 150 students seeking a non-traditional educational path.
- 151 ● Provides schools with information related to the benefits of taking an online course
- 152 to supplement students’ in-person instruction, to allow flexibility where possible,
- 153 and to prepare students for post-secondary opportunities in a digital world.
- 154 ● Provides training to school site facilitators in the division when ACPS students are
- 155 taking classes during the school day or from school based facilities.
- 156 ● Provides training and awareness programs to meet the needs of school leadership,
- 157 counselors, and other appropriate staff members.
- 158 ● Provides students with required supplemental course materials if applicable:
- 159 ● Assesses and evaluates student progress in accordance with the course for which
- 160 the student has registered.
- 161 ● Implements a common drop process for students enrolled in online courses
- 162 ● Provides the schools with information regarding course registration processes.
- 163 ● Ensures that school issued devices meet the technical specifications that are needed
- 164 for students to successfully participate in online courses.
- 165 ● Communicates with appropriate school staff regarding dates for course registration
- 166 throughout the year.
- 167 ● Creates online student accounts with applicable online providers and enrolls
- 168 students in the requested online course.
- 169 ● Assigns a mentor to each online enrollment.
- 170 ● The OLP works with each school’s respective School Registrar and School
- 171 Counselors to ensure online courses are accurately scheduled and recorded in the
- 172 student information system and that proper grades and credit information is also
- 173 recorded in the student information system.
- 174 ● Considers requests for extensions.
- 175

176 **School:**

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 178 The school oversees the successful implementation of online courses and the Virtual
 179 Academy. The school:

- 180
- 181 ● Assists in educating students and parents regarding the availability of online
- 182 learning options made available by ACPS.
- 183 ● Follows the student enrollment guidelines as set forth by the OLP.

- 184 ● Provides testing venues for students when a face-to-face assessment is required.
- 185 ● Enters course grades that students earn on student report cards and transcripts.
- 186 ● Collaborates with the OLP to assign a mentor to those online courses and students
- 187 in the event that students take part of their regular school day to access their online
- 188 course.
- 189 ● Requests extensions if necessary.

190
191 **School Counselors**

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193 The school counselors ensure students are enrolled in courses that meet their unique needs.
194 School counselors:

- 195
- 196 ● Provides information to students, parents/guardians and staff regarding OLP
- 197 offerings, scheduling, and registration.
- 198 ● Determines courses needed by students based on scheduling and on other needs.
- 199 ● Provides requested information and other documentation to the OLP contact.
- 200 ● Determines whether there is a match between students’ needs and the use of online
- 201 courses.
- 202 ● Provides the student and family with the current Online Learning Contract.
- 203 ● Completes the Online Enrollment Request Form and attaches the completed Online
- 204 Learning Contract.
- 205 ● Ensures that proper grade and credit information for online courses are recorded in
- 206 the student information system.
- 207 ● Reviews student progress information.
- 208 ● Notifies the OLP if it appears that the student will need to drop the course within
- 209 ten (10) calendar days of the student being enrolled in the course.

210
211 **Mentor**

212
213 The mentor role is vital in providing students with support for online coursework both
214 during and after the regular school day. The mentor works directly with the student to
215 provide encouragement and weekly monitoring. The mentor:

- 216
- 217 ● Assures computing devices meet course requirements and have appropriate plug-
- 218 ins installed.
- 219 ● Works with the OLP to provide an orientation to online learning for students and
- 220 families.
- 221 ● Monitors the student’s progress and works together with the OLP to maintain
- 222 contact with the online teacher as needed.
- 223 ● Checks weekly with the student to determine student progress and provide support
- 224 as needed.
- 225 ● Proctors face-to-face exams.
- 226 ● Takes regular attendance for students taking an online course during the school day.
- 227 ● Communicates with the OLP and various vendor technical support personnel as
- 228 needed.

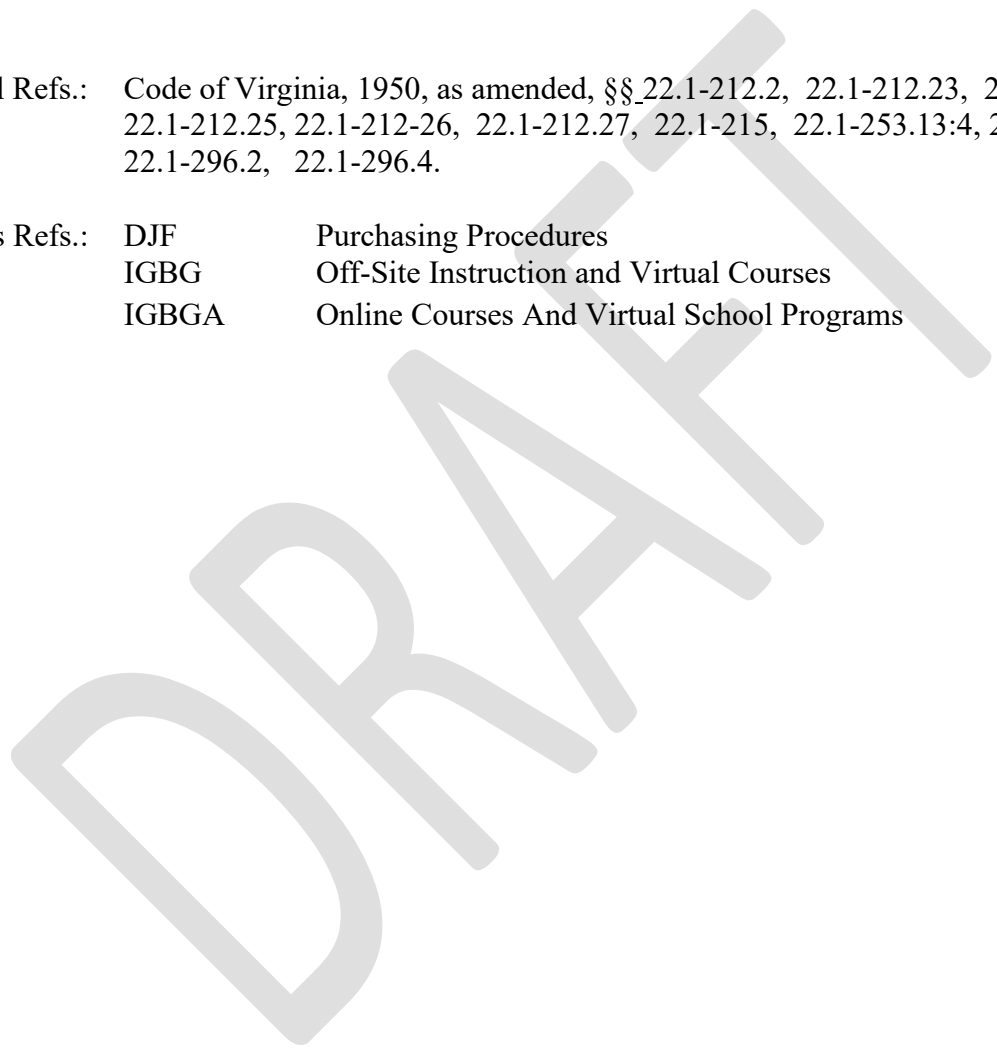
- 229 ● Communicates with the OLP to provide feedback on the course, instruction, and
230 satisfaction level of the students and parents/guardians.
- 231 ● Participates in necessary training to have a clear understanding of expectations of
232 individual vendors and technologies.
- 233 ● Enters quarterly and final grades in the school division’s grade recording system.
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236 Established: May 14, 2015

237 Amended:

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239
240 Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, §§ 22.1-212.2, 22.1-212.23, 22.1-212.24,
241 22.1-212.25, 22.1-212-26, 22.1-212.27, 22.1-215, 22.1-253.13:4, 22.1-296.1,
242 22.1-296.2, 22.1-296.4.

243
244 Cross Refs.: DJF Purchasing Procedures
245 IGBG Off-Site Instruction and Virtual Courses
246 IGBGA Online Courses And Virtual School Programs



~~**ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS – ONLINE LEARNING PROGRAM**~~

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~~The ACPS Online Learning Program (ACPS-OLP) is the division program responsible for the oversight, distribution, and quality assurance of online learning opportunities for ACPS students. This document outlines the guidelines for participation in the OLP. These guidelines will help assure that all parties are aware of their roles in assisting students to succeed when taking online learning options from ACPS – OLP.~~

~~**I. General Overview**~~

~~**A. The ACPS Online Learning Program will:**~~

- ~~1. Oversee the approval, distribution, and establish quality assurance guidelines for all online learning options that are made available to ACPS students.~~
- ~~2. Provide in-service training to school site facilitators in the district when ACPS students are taking classes during the school day or from school based facilities.~~
- ~~3. Provide training and awareness programs to meet the needs of the school leadership, counselors, and other appropriate staff members.~~
- ~~4. Provide students with required supplemental course materials if applicable.~~
- ~~5. Assess and evaluate student progress in accordance with the course for which the student has registered.~~
- ~~6. Implement a common drop policy for students enrolled in online courses.~~
- ~~7. Provide the schools with information regarding course registration processes.~~

~~**B. The School will:**~~

- ~~1. Assist in educating students and parents regarding the availability of online learning options that ACPS makes available.~~
- ~~2. Follow the student enrollment guidelines as set forth by the ACPS-OLP.~~
- ~~3. Provide testing venues for students when a face-to-face assessment is required.~~
- ~~4. Enter course grades that students earn on student transcripts.~~
- ~~5. Work together with the Director of Online Learning to assign a Mentor to those online courses and students in the event that students take part of their regular school day to access their online course.~~

~~**II. Necessary School Support Personnel**~~

~~**A. Guidance Counselors**~~

~~The guidance counselors will be responsible for working in conjunction with the Director of Online Learning in order to:~~

- ~~1. Provide information to students, parents/guardians and staff regarding ACPS-OLP offerings, scheduling, and registration.~~
- ~~2. Determine courses needed by students based on scheduling and on other needs.~~
- ~~3. Provide requested information and other documentation to the ACPS-OLP contact.~~

- 47 ~~4. Determine whether there is a match between students' needs and the use of online~~
- 48 ~~courses.~~
- 49 ~~5. Work with the ACPS-OLP to provide an orientation to learning online for parents and~~
- 50 ~~students.~~
- 51 ~~6. Ensure that proper grade and credit information for online courses are recorded in the~~
- 52 ~~student's transcript.~~
- 53 ~~7. Coordinate the securing of student services as needed, including the proctoring of any~~
- 54 ~~face-to-face exams that may be required.~~
- 55 ~~8. Review student progress information.~~
- 56 ~~9. Notify the ACPS-OLP contact if it appears that the student will need to drop the course~~
- 57 ~~within ten (10) school days of the student being granted access to the course.~~

58 ¶

59 **B. Mentor** ¶

60 ¶

61 ~~The Mentor role is necessary should students be accessing their online course(s) from the school~~

62 ~~during the regular school day. The Mentor works directly with the student to provide~~

63 ~~encouragement and weekly monitoring. The Mentor will:~~

64 ¶

- 65 ~~1. Assure work stations meet course requirements and have appropriate plug-ins installed.~~
- 66 ~~2. Monitor the student's progress and work together with the Director of Online Learning to~~
- 67 ~~maintain contact with the online teacher as needed.~~
- 68 ~~3. Check weekly with the student to see how the student is progressing and provide support~~
- 69 ~~as needed.~~
- 70 ~~4. Proctor face-to-face exams.~~
- 71 ~~5. Take regular attendance for students working on course in a face-to-face environment.~~
- 72 ~~6. Communicate with ACPS-OLP contact and various vendor technical support personnel as~~
- 73 ~~needed.~~
- 74 ~~7. Communicate with the ACPS-OLP contact to provide feedback on the course,~~
- 75 ~~instruction, and the satisfaction level of the students and parents/guardians.~~
- 76 ~~8. Participate in any necessary training to have a clear understanding of expectations of~~
- 77 ~~individual vendors and technologies.~~

78 ¶

79 **III. Participation Policies and Guidelines** ¶

80 ¶

81 **A. Course Selection and Enrollment Policy** ¶

82 ¶

- 83 ~~1. Only online courses and online course providers approved through the ACPS-OLP are~~
- 84 ~~eligible for enrollment and academic credit.~~
- 85 ~~2. Only students who are enrolled in the district are currently eligible to take a course with~~
- 86 ~~ACPS-OLP.~~
- 87 ~~3. Students shall be eligible to enroll in online courses as long as the course request is~~
- 88 ~~academically appropriate for the student.~~
- 89 ~~4. No minimum GPA is required to enroll in an online course. School leaders and~~
- 90 ~~counselors should refer to the "Profile of a Successful Online Student" guidelines~~
- 91 ~~(Appendix A) when processing a student's request to enroll in an online course.~~

92 ~~5. Students' requests to enroll in online courses shall be submitted to the ACPS-OLP~~
 93 ~~contact by the school guidance counselor via the online form link.¶¶~~

94 ~~6. It is recommended that students enroll in no more than two courses per term during the~~
 95 ~~regular school year. Exceptions must be approved by the ACPS-OLP.¶¶~~

96 ~~7. A student may not retake a course through the ACPS-OLP if a unit of credit for that~~
 97 ~~particular course is already recorded on his/her official transcript.¶¶~~

98 ¶¶

99 ~~B. Attendance, Course Completion and Academic Records Policy¶¶~~

100 ¶¶

101 ~~1. Students enrolled in online courses must maintain a steady pace of communication and~~
 102 ~~submission of assignments as set forth by their online teacher. Failure to actively engage~~
 103 ~~in the online course may result in the student being withdrawn from the course.¶¶~~

104 ~~2. All course work and required assessments must be completed by the assigned course~~
 105 ~~completion deadline unless an extension is recommended by the student's principal and~~
 106 ~~approved by ACPS-OLP.¶¶~~

107 ~~3. Official final course grades (transcript/grade report) will be reported to the school~~
 108 ~~facilitator/guidance counselor. Interim and quarter grades may not be reported.¶¶~~

109 ¶¶

110 ~~C. Drop Policy¶¶~~

111 ¶¶

112 ~~1. Grace Period – Students may withdraw from their online course within the first 10 days of~~
 113 ~~activation for any reason without academic penalty. The school guidance counselor or~~
 114 ~~mentor is responsible for notifying ACPS-OLP regarding withdrawal requests.¶¶~~

115 ~~2. A student who requests to drop an online course (or is administratively withdrawn for~~
 116 ~~non-performance) will receive a grade of W/P (withdraw passing) if he or she was~~
 117 ~~passing the course at the time of the drop or a W/F (withdraw failing) if he or she was~~
 118 ~~failing the course at the time of the drop. The grade of W/P will carry no Carnegie units~~
 119 ~~and no quality points will be factored into the student's grade. The student will receive a~~
 120 ~~W/F (withdraw failing) if he or she is failing the course. The grade of a W/F will carry no~~
 121 ~~Carnegie units but WILL be factored into the student's GPA as zero quality points."¶¶~~

122 ¶¶

123 ~~D. Online Course Agreement¶¶~~

124 ¶¶

125 ~~1. As part of the course request and registration process, students and their legal guardians~~
 126 ~~must sign and return the ACPS-OLP Online Course Agreement to their school counselor.~~
 127 ~~See Appendix B.¶¶~~

128 ¶¶

129 ~~IV. Funding¶¶~~

130 ¶¶

131 ~~Unless specified otherwise, online courses made available through ACPS-OLP during the regular~~
 132 ~~calendar year are provided at no cost to the students. Online courses taken outside of the regular~~
 133 ~~calendar year (during summer school) are subject to the same fees as face-to-face courses offered~~
 134 ~~outside of the regular calendar year.¶¶~~

135 ¶¶

~~V. Technical Specifications¶¶~~

~~¶¶~~

~~ACPS OLP will ensure that school issued devices meet the technical specifications that are needed for students to successfully participate in online courses.¶¶~~

~~Students enrolled in online courses are provided unrestricted access to the student help desk for technical issues.¶¶~~

~~¶¶~~

~~While students may access their online course at a time and place outside of the regular school day, ACPS OLP is not responsible for ensuring that non-district computers meet the minimum technical specifications.¶¶~~

~~¶¶~~

~~VI. Calendar¶¶~~

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~~ACPS OLP will communicate with appropriate school staff regarding dates for course registration throughout the year.¶¶~~

~~¶¶~~

~~VII. ACPS OLP Online Course Offerings¶¶~~

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~~Online courses available through ACPS OLP can be found at:¶¶~~

~~¶¶~~

~~www.acps.k12.va.us/technology/olp/courses.php¶¶~~

~~¶¶~~

~~Note that the availability of certain courses may change from time to time during the school year.¶¶~~

~~¶¶~~

~~Amended: May 14, 2015~~