

ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS - ONLINE LEARNING PROGRAM

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.

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

B. Mentor

The Mentor role is necessary should students be accessing their online course(s) from the school during the regular school day. The Mentor works directly with the student to provide encouragement and weekly monitoring. The Mentor will:

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

III. Participation Policies and Guidelines

A. Course Selection and Enrollment Policy

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

5. Students' requests to enroll in online courses shall be submitted to the ACPS-OLP contact by the school guidance counselor via the online form link.
6. It is recommended that students enroll in no more than two courses per term during the regular school year. Exceptions must be approved by the ACPS-OLP.
7. A student may not retake a course through the ACPS-OLP if a unit of credit for that particular course is already recorded on his/her official transcript.

B. Attendance, Course Completion and Academic Records Policy

1. Students enrolled in online courses must maintain a steady pace of communication and submission of assignments as set forth by their online teacher. Failure to actively engage in the online course may result in the student being withdrawn from the course.
2. All course work and required assessments must be completed by the assigned course completion deadline unless an extension is recommended by the student's principal and approved by ACPS-OLP.
3. Official final course grades (transcript/grade report) will be reported to the school facilitator/guidance counselor. Interim and quarter grades may not be reported.

C. Drop Policy

1. Grace Period - Students may withdraw from their online course within the first 10 days of activation for any reason without academic penalty. The school guidance counselor or mentor is responsible for notifying ACPS-OLP regarding withdrawal requests.
2. A student who requests to drop an online course (or is administratively withdrawn for non-performance) will receive a grade of W/P (withdraw passing) if he or she was passing the course at the time of the drop or a W/F (withdraw failing) if he or she was failing the course at the time of the drop. The grade of W/P will carry no Carnegie units and no quality points will be factored into the student's grade. The student will receive a W/F (withdraw failing) if he or she is failing the course. The grade of a W/F will carry no Carnegie units but **WILL** be factored into the student's GPA as zero quality points."

D. Online Course Agreement

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

IV. Funding

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

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

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

VII. ACPS-OLP Online Course Offerings

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

APPENDIX A

ACPS Online Learning Program Profile of a Successful Online Student

Students who choose to participate in online courses need to examine their personal skills and aptitudes for taking a class online. The following attributes will greatly contribute to a student's success:

- **Self-motivation** — Students can direct their own learning environment and methods to fulfill course requirements and achieve individual academic success.
- **Independent learner** — The online environment enables students to learn at their own pace, relieving the stress of feeling rushed or pressured and providing enjoyment in the learning process.
- **Computer literate** — Although it is not necessary to have advanced computer skills, students should possess a working knowledge of electronic e-mail, the Internet, as well as basic keyboarding skills.
- **Time management** — Students must be able to organize and plan their own best "time to learn." There is no one best time for everyone, but the key to learning is to make the time to learn.
- **Effective written communication skills** — Students must use electronic e-mail and discussion forums to communicate with their peers as well as the instructors. The ability to write clearly to communicate ideas and assignments is essential. This method provides the learner with rapid feedback as well as a means to inform instructors of any concerns or problems that they may be experiencing.
- **Personal commitment** — Because there are no bells that begin and end classes, students must have a strong desire to learn and achieve knowledge and skills via online courses. Making a commitment to learn in this manner is a very personal decision and requires a strong commitment to perform in order to achieve academic success.
- **Last but not least**, successful online students are students who decide for themselves that online learning is a choice that they want to make.

SPECIAL NOTE: Students may actually learn and hone the above skills by taking an online course. Be careful not to deny a student's request and interest in online learning simply because they have not mastered all of the above skills. These are merely considerations.

When may it be in the best interest of a student to enroll in an online course?

- Resolve scheduling conflicts at school or meet the needs of different schedule configurations
- Allows student flexibility in use of time to meet other school/family/work commitments
- To take courses not available at the student's home school
- Student needs to make up a credit
- Online may be a better-suited learning environment
- Student desires the experience of taking a distance education course
- Provides opportunity for student to complete course(s) at an accelerated pace
- Provides extended time to complete coursework for those students that need additional time
- To meet the needs of a transferring student
- Students who have medical conditions that may not allow them to be present for a full day

When may it not be in the best interest of a student to enroll in an online course?

- Student does not meet the profile of a successful online student.
- Student requires a remedial program not an entire course.
- Student will not have reliable access to the appropriate computer hardware.
- If taking an online course is not the student's choice. Students should desire to take course(s) online rather than having significant adults choosing the online course for the students.

APPENDIX B

ACPS Online Learning Contract

This form must be printed and signed by the student and parent/guardian prior to beginning coursework. It should be returned to your online learning mentor. 8th block students can drop contracts off in the online learning classroom (Room C103 off of Quiet Dining)

I. Student Contact and Drop Policy

Only through continuous communication and completion of course assignments can students be successful in an online course. Within each course the instructor outlines the weekly minimum work requirements. It is essential that the student and instructor maintain regular contact.

Students may withdraw from their online course within the first 10 days of activation for any reason without academic penalty (aka “grace period.”) Students must notify their school counselor of their request to withdraw from their online course.

Students who request to drop their online course after the 10 day grace period (or are administratively withdrawn for non-performance) will receive a grade of W/P (withdraw passing) if he or she was passing the course at the time of the drop or a W/F (withdraw failing) if he or she was failing the course at the time of the drop. The grade of W/P will carry no Carnegie units and no quality points will be factored into the student’s grade. The student will receive a W/F (withdraw failing) if he or she is failing the course. The grade of a W/F will carry no Carnegie units but **WILL** be factored into the student’s GPA as zero quality points.

End of Quarter Grades: Online course EOQ grades will be reflective of both current grade and pace. While online learning does provide flexibility in pacing, students are expected to make continuous progress in their course(s). The goal of the ACPS-OLP is to provide that flexibility but to create and hold students to benchmarks. If students are well behind the benchmarks at the end of the quarter, grades will reflect that variance. Students will always have access to updated grades and will be meet regularly with their online learning mentor to discuss methods and best practices to stay on pace. Students who are not on pace, will be reevaluated at the end of each quarter and another setting may be found in order to keep students on track for graduation. While online courses do provide flexibility in when and where to work, consistent progress is expected and will be enforced.

Testing: Students are expected to take all Topic Tests and Cumulative Exams on site with a proctor.

II. Parental and Student Consent

As the parent or legal guardian of the student below, my signature below grants permission indicates that I have read and agree to the terms as outlined in this Online Learning Contract. I understand that it is impossible for ACPS to monitor access to student controversial materials, and I will not hold the school responsible for inappropriate materials accessed on the network. Furthermore, I accept full responsibility for supervision if and when my child's use is not in a school setting.

As the requesting student, I have read and agree to the terms outline in this Online Learning Contract.

Parent/Guardian Signature & Date

Parent Email Address and phone number

Student Signature & Date