

Virtual Instruction

Definitions

- *Virtual instruction* means teaching and learning that takes place through digital means and can be synchronous or asynchronous.
- *Distance Education* (under NDCC Ch. 15-19) means a method of learning in which students complete courses remotely through the North Dakota Center for Distance Education (NDCDE), a state-supported program that offers K-12 curriculum and high school diplomas, providing students with flexible access to accredited coursework.

Virtual Instruction Options

When Bismarck Public Schools finds it impossible or impractical to offer a course or courses in a traditional in-person format, the District may opt to offer semester or year-long virtual instruction using its own virtual platform(s), including the Bismarck Virtual Academy or an external provider, including NDCDE or some other institution which has an accredited virtual instruction division. Students unable to attend for reasons defined in NDCC 15.1-7-37, may petition the building principal for permission to take virtual instruction toward graduation credits.

Virtual Instruction may be offered as a part of the gifted and talented program of the school or if a student is unable, because of scheduling difficulties, to take a course offered by the Bismarck Public Schools and required for graduation. Failure in an in-person course is not justification on its own for enrollment in virtual course. The District must notify students and their parents annually about available virtual courses through the NDCDE in accordance with NDCC § 15-19-01.1.

Limitations and Restrictions

The following limitations and restrictions apply when the District offers virtual instruction using its own teachers or an external provider:

1. Students must adhere to the same prerequisites and core requirements as in-person courses.
2. The district may require students enrolled in virtual courses to work with a district assigned learning coach/guide.
3. The district schools will implement registration and add/drop timelines which align with in-person course registrations. Any requests for virtual instruction, including NDCDE, must be made during the normal registration window for the upcoming school year.

4. Students must be in attendance in their building for a minimum of 50% of the school day. Students wanting to attend less than less than 50% of the school day would need to pursue enrolling as a “home-schooled” student or available options in the Bismarck Public Schools Virtual Academy.

District Responsibilities

The District will not unreasonably restrict student access to virtual instruction options and must comply with (1) applicable laws; (2) the rules adopted by the superintendent of public instruction; and (3) administrative rules applicable to onsite students, as distinguished from virtual academy students.

The District is responsible for covering the required fees when the student chooses to enroll in courses through NDCDE in accordance with NDCC § 15-19-01 (3). The District must pay for a virtual instruction course if the District does not offer the course and obtaining the course credit would contribute to the student meeting high school graduation requirements in time to graduate within the usual time frame in accordance with NDCC § 15.1-07-25.4 (d). The District has the discretion to determine whether to pay for a virtual instruction course retake in accordance with NDCC § 15.1-07-25.4 (f).

Virtual Instruction Registration

Registration for virtual instruction will coincide with the District’s course registration schedule and deadlines. Once enrolled in a virtual class, the class will be listed on the student's cumulative record form. The grade will be recorded and will be used in determining the GPA of the student.

Credit will be granted only if the course would normally be found in a high school curriculum. To be accepted as a part of the requirements for graduation, the record of credit must be received and recorded one week prior to graduation.