

# Antietam Virtual Academy



## Student-Parent Handbook 2025-2026

Antietam School District  
100 Antietam Road  
Reading, PA 19606  
610-779-0554

Welcome to AVA,

The Antietam School District (ASD) recognizes the integral role that today's technology plays in the teaching and learning process. Further, the Antietam School District recognizes that the traditional "brick-and-mortar" style of education does not fit all students and all families. Therefore, the district has established the Antietam Virtual Academy to provide an online learning option for students who reside within the Antietam School District.

The Antietam Virtual Academy believes that opportunities for learning in today's technologically connected world should be available at all times and in diverse ways. In collaboration with online course providers, the Antietam Virtual Academy offers a standards-based curriculum for students in K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade who desire an online learning environment. The goal of the Antietam Virtual Academy is to provide a challenging, rigorous, and relevant education to students while maintaining a sense of community and connectedness to the school district.

To that end, the Antietam School District has developed the following guidelines to assure that both the individual education of each student and the academic and financial integrity of the District are maintained. Change is a constant in the current world of technology and education, which makes it nearly impossible to anticipate every situation. The ASD maintains the latitude to make decisions on an individual student basis within the philosophy and guidelines of the District and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

## District Mission and Vision Statement

### Mission Statement

Together We: Encourage Learners, Inspire Growth, Foster Community

### Vision Statement

We, the Antietam Community, are committed to guiding our learners as they pursue their passions through:

- Robust, coherent curricula that prioritizes developing deep understanding
- Adaptive and inclusive learning environments built on responsive instruction to meet the demands of a changing world
- Opportunities to cultivate responsible decision making, persistence, social awareness, healthy relationships, and effective communication skills
- A collaborative and diverse community that engages in building Mountaineer pride

AVA Framework: Students can select from two coursework options:

- Full time online coursework completed at home through Imagine Learning
- Part time coursework online through Imagine Learning and part time coursework in the school environment with additional in-person support if/as necessary.

## AVA Program Contact Information

Contact	Position	Phone	E-mail
Mr. Christian Murray	Supervisor of AVA	610-779-3545	<a href="mailto:cmurray@antietamsd.org">cmurray@antietamsd.org</a>
Mrs. Kaitlyn Yourkavitch	Secondary Guidance Counselor	610-779-3545	<a href="mailto:kyourkavitch@antietamsd.org">kyourkavitch@antietamsd.org</a>
Mr. Mark Carvalho	Secondary Guidance Counselor	610-779-3545	<a href="mailto:mcarvalho@antietamsd.org">mcarvalho@antietamsd.org</a>
Dr. Felice Stern	High School Principal	610-779-3545	<a href="mailto:fstern@antietamsd.org">fstern@antietamsd.org</a>
Mr. Michael Chwiecko	High School Assistant Principal	610-779-3545	<a href="mailto:mchwiecko@antietamsd.org">mchwiecko@antietamsd.org</a>
Mr. Zack Williams	Middle School 6-8 Principal	610-779-3547	<a href="mailto:zwilliams@antietamsd.org">zwilliams@antietamsd.org</a>
Mrs. Kelly Landherr	Elementary 4-5 Principal	610-779-3547	<a href="mailto:klandherr@antietamsd.org">klandherr@antietamsd.org</a>

### 2025-2026 District Calendar:

AVA Students will follow the ASD School Calendar. Important Dates as outlined below. Dates are subject to change due to inclement weather. Grade reporting for AVA through the provider is done on a semester basis.

First day of school	Monday, August 25th
End of Semester 1	January 15, 2026
End of Semester 2	June 3, 2026

### Enrollment and Registration Process

- Discuss the option of enrolling the student on AVA with building administration or school counselor
- Contact the AVA Supervisor to begin the registration process.
- Following district registration and the receipt of academic records, the Supervisor of AVA will contact the family and student to start the enrollment process with our provider.

### Dropping/Adding/Changing Courses

Changes in course schedules may be made during the first 10 days of the course if it is determined by the parents, student and AVA supervisor that such changes are warranted. If changes are being made that involve a student returning to the brick-and-mortar setting, those changes will ideally happen within the first 10 days of the semester unless there are extenuating circumstances.

## Pacing and Grade Reporting

- **Pacing:** Students are encouraged to follow the timeline established for a given course for which they register. For example, it is expected students complete semester courses by the end of the semester, typically 17-18 weeks. A full-year course that consists of two semesters (Part A and Part B) of coursework will receive a grade for each semester but will not be awarded credit until both semesters are complete. The expectation is that all full credit courses are to be concluded by the last day of the school year.
- **Grades:** Grades will be available via Skyward at the end of each semester. A report card will be provided at the end of the school year.
- **Progress Reporting:** Progress reports can be emailed to parents via the AVA provider on a daily or weekly basis. Progress reports are sent by email to parents on a weekly basis through the Imagine Learning platform.

## Promotion Guidelines

Students will be promoted to the next grade level upon successful completion of their courses for an academic school year. The promotion guidelines will follow those established by the Antietam School District for the particular grade level in which the student is enrolled. Promotion by grade level must meet the credit requirements set forth by district policy, noted below.

Grade Level	Requirements
K-4	Students will be registered for a grade-level cluster of courses.
5-8	Math, Science, Social Studies, ELA, PE, Health, 2 Electives
<p>Graduation Requirements: Students of the Antietam Virtual Academy will fulfill graduation requirements as outlined by the Antietam School District. In order to earn a Antietam School District diploma, students must earn 23 credits in Grades 9-12 as outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Four (4) English credits</li> <li>● Four (4) Social Studies credits</li> <li>● Four (4) Mathematics credits (3 credits if student was Proficient on Algebra Keystone)*</li> <li>● Three (3) Science credits</li> <li>● 1.5 Physical Education credits (0.5 credits / PE Class)</li> <li>● 0.5 Health credit</li> <li>● Elective courses to earn the balance of 23 credits</li> <li>● AVA students may take up to 2 elective credits per year</li> </ul> <p>In addition, all students must complete 30 hours of community service. The requirements and guidelines for the Community Service may be found in the HS Student Handbook on our website. Students in grades 5, 8, 11 must complete certain career-related activities which will be directed by their school counselors. This will count as evidence of meeting Career Readiness Benchmarks required by the state.</p>	
9	Algebra 1, ELA, American History, Science course, Health, PE, Electives
10	Math, ELA, World Cultures, Biology, PE, 2 Electives
11	Math, ELA, Economics, Chemistry, PE, 2 Electives
12	*Math, ELA, Civics and one Social Studies elective, Physics, 2 Electives

## Withdrawal Process

Any desire to withdraw from AVA on either the part of the family or student shall be communicated directly to the AVA Supervisor and a meeting with appropriate stakeholders will determine the final placement in the best interest of the student. In addition, the Antietam School District may request that a change in placement occur when students are not successfully completing their coursework (not passing and/or not logging in regularly) in the virtual academy. This process would include prior notification of academic difficulty and/or attendance concerns. The parent and student would need to meet with a building administrator, school counselor and AVA supervisor to determine placement alternatives.

## Grading Scale

The Grading Scale for AVA students will follow the Grading Scale for Antietam School District students. Final course grades of 59 or below will be considered failing course grades. Students qualify for credit recovery/summer school if the final grade is between 50 and 59. Final course grades less than 50 require a student to retake the course. Credit recovery/summer school courses will be at the cost of the family. Summer school classes will be assigned a maximum grade of 60 if the student passes the course.

## Responsible Student Participation

Students of the Antietam Virtual Academy will:

- Participate in all state-mandated testing
- Meet all graduation requirements of the ASD, including completion of a 30 hours of Community Service and meeting the Career Readiness Benchmark for their grade level, in order to earn an Antietam School District diploma
- Utilize school resources appropriately, and when necessary, by appointment. This could include the library, guidance department, and advising teachers.
- Follow all school rules when accessing the facilities of ASD.
- Be subject to immediate consequences and possible dismissal from the Antietam Virtual Academy for any confirmed cases of cyberbullying, cyber stalking or cyber harassment or any violation of ASD policy.
- Be subject to immediate consequences and possible dismissal from the Antietam Virtual Academy for any confirmed cases of plagiarism or use of artificial intelligence to complete assignments, assessments, projects for their AVA courses (see Academic Honesty section below for additional information)
- Properly care for district-issued equipment and to return the equipment, as requested, to the school district so that necessary maintenance and updates may be completed.
- Responsibly report problems with technology to the AVA Supervisor. Computer problems are NOT an acceptable excuse for failing to complete coursework on time. Antietam Virtual Academy courses may be accessed through any Internet connection, so students with technology problems should utilize alternate resources to complete coursework until their technology has been repaired or replaced.

## State-Mandated/Standardized Testing

Students enrolled in the Antietam Virtual Academy will be required to participate in state-mandated testing relevant to the students' specific grade level. Students will complete all standardized tests in the school building in which the student would be enrolled and will follow the schedule established by the school district. Parents are responsible for providing transportation for students to complete the state-mandated testing. Further, AVA students are encouraged to participate in PSAT, SAT and ACT.

## Co-Curricular Activities (Clubs and Sports)

AVA Students are encouraged to participate fully in the variety of Co-Curricular opportunities afforded any ASD student. Students in the Antietam Virtual Academy will need to meet academic standards in order to comply with the extracurricular eligibility guidelines established by the District. Information pertaining to eligibility guidelines may be found in the Student Handbook for each respective school building. The Student Handbook is located on the high school website under the Parent tab.

## Expectations for Parents/Guardians/Home Facilitators

The Antietam Virtual Academy encourages active participation from a parent or guardian in their student's education. While the Antietam Virtual Academy provides the resources and tools to participate in an online learning environment, parents and guardians provide daily supervision and management to foster their student's success. Students who are successful in an online learning environment enjoy the support, encouragement, and guidance of their parents/guardians.

Therefore, parents/guardians of Antietam Virtual Academy students are expected to:

- supervise their student's work and be consistently involved in their child's education
- provide support and encouragement
- maintain communication with instructors, both in-district and with the provider
- monitor their child's progress by checking emailed reports from the curriculum providers and check their student's pacing guides for each class
  - The Imagine Learning system provides a general overview whether or not a student is on pace or behind
- hold their child responsible for completing coursework
- oversee the care of school materials including district-issued technology and contact the AVA supervisor for any technology issues immediately. Since the courses can be accessed through any computer, technology problems are NOT an acceptable excuse for failing to complete coursework on time.
- ensure that the child attends online courses on a regular basis
- provide transportation to local district buildings for the student to participate in state-mandated testing and as needed for support
- communicate any concerns to the AVA Supervisor so that issues may be addressed and resolved in a timely and cooperative manner

## Attendance Policy

Regular attendance in any learning environment is critical to student success. Students who do not participate in their online courses on a regular basis will not experience the benefits of online learning nor progress meaningfully. Online learning enables students to be active participants in their education and to delve deeply into the subject matter, which requires substantial time on the student's part. Further, regular attendance instills responsible work and study habits in students. Recognizing the importance of regular attendance and online students' desire for flexibility, the following attendance guidelines apply to Antietam Virtual Academy students:

- Within a seven-day period, beginning every Monday at 12:01 a.m., students are required to sign in to their courses the equivalent number of days that school is in session within that week and for an hour per course per number of days in the school week.
  - For example, if the ASD has five student days within a given week, Virtual Academy students will be expected to sign in to their courses on five separate days within that same week, with a "week" being defined as 12:01 a.m. Monday through midnight on Sunday.
- Students are not required to "attend" classes on days that the "brick and mortar" students are not required to attend. This includes snow days, Act 80/Inservice days, or holidays approved by the Antietam School District. Students are encouraged to continue their coursework regardless of whether school is in session or not.
- As a general rule, students should spend at least one hour per day per enrolled online course working through course material.
- For AVA students who elect to take some courses at the district's schools, all attendance rules and procedures apply. Students are expected to attend all classes. If attendance is not possible on a given day or span of days, the parent/guardian must contact the office, as per the student handbook. The AVA Supervisor does not track attendance for brick-and-mortar classes.
- Parents/Guardians are required to immediately report any absences to the AVA Supervisor. Legal absences include illness, serious illness or death in the immediate family, emergency medical or dental attention, absences approved in advance by the school principal, and authorized religious holidays.
- If a student does not log in to his or her online courses for ten (10) or more consecutive days, the parent/guardian of that student will be contacted. If the student fails to log in to his or her courses following that contact, the student may be withdrawn from the Antietam Virtual Academy and dropped from the district rolls for non-attendance as per Antietam School District policy.
- Upon dropping a course or withdrawing from the Antietam Virtual Academy, parents are responsible for promptly returning any school-issued equipment. Failure to return these items within three (3) days may result in a complaint filed with the local magistrate's office.
- Failure to attend online classes based on the standards above will subject Antietam Virtual Academy students to the same truancy and non-attendance consequences as students enrolled in the Antietam School District. As such, AVA students are subject to the same truancy statutes as in-person students.
- Ultimately, Antietam Virtual Academy students are subject to the same attendance rules and laws as students attending a brick-and-mortar public school as outlined in the Pennsylvania School Code.

## Academic Honesty

- Work submitted for completion of virtual assignments and assessments are expected to be the product of a student's efforts and therefore be an accurate representation of the student's understanding of the topic in question.
- Imagine Learning makes use of plagiarism and AI detection as part of their responsibility to administer courses. The virtual instructor for the course would begin the determination of whether or not work submitted is plagiarized.
  - **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** refers to computer programs and tools—like ChatGPT or Grammarly—that can generate text, ideas, answers, or even full essays based on user prompts. These tools can be useful for brainstorming or checking grammar, but they must be used responsibly in an academic setting.
  - **AI Generated Response:** An AI-generated response is any assignment, essay, discussion post, or project that includes text written by an AI tool instead of the student's original thinking and voice. These responses may appear polished, unusually fast, or written in a tone that does not match a typical high school student's style.
  - Acceptable Use of AI includes:
    - Brainstorming ideas for a topic.
    - Asking for help understanding a concept.
    - Getting grammar or spelling suggestions.
    - Reviewing examples of how to structure an assignment (e.g., seeing how a thesis is formed)
  - Unacceptable Use of AI:
    - Submitting AI-written text as your own work.
    - Copying and pasting responses from AI tools without editing or citing.
    - Using AI to complete full assignments, essays, or discussion posts without your own contribution.
    - Relying on AI so heavily that it replaces your original thinking and voice.
  - Detection of AI generated responses and plagiarism are done by the instructor for the course and Imagine Learning and may include the following processes:
    - Unusual writing style: Responses that sound too advanced, overly formal, or inconsistent with a student's known writing voice.
    - Time of completion: Submissions that are completed far more quickly than expected, especially for longer assignments.
    - Verification tools: AI-detection software may be used to flag suspicious responses.
    - Content red flags: Responses that include incorrect facts, improper citations, or generic/overly vague answers may be reviewed.
  - Using AI to complete student work without acknowledging it is considered a form of plagiarism. Just like copying from a website or another student, submitting AI-written work as a student's own violates academic honesty expectations. Students are expected to:
    - Use their own words and voice.
    - Cite sources properly, including AI if it meaningfully contributed.
    - Ask their teacher when in doubt about appropriate use.

- As students are still subject to Antietam School District policies and procedures for plagiarism, if Imagine Learning notifies the district of a confirmed instance of plagiarism, students would be subject to discipline under Board Policy 815.2 and the Antietam Student Handbook.
  - The typical procedure includes the following actions:
    - On a first offense, the student is given a zero but provided the chance to redo the assignment for credit.
    - A meeting is held in the district with the student and parent to review the policy regarding use of generative AI and plagiarism.
    - On a second offense, a zero is assigned for the grade.
    - A meeting is held with the district to determine if AVA is an appropriate placement and plan next steps with the parent and student.

## Material

The majority of online courses do not require textbooks. If it is necessary to print materials, contact the AVA Supervisor for assistance with printing or other accommodations.

## Laptop Distribution/Collection

- Laptops will be distributed to all AVA students at the start of the school year or enrollment in the Virtual Academy. Parents/Guardians and students MUST sign and return the “Technology Equipment Loan Form”.
- Laptops will be collected at the end of the school year for maintenance and updates; they will be reissued to the students at the start of the new school.

## Laptop Care

- General Guidelines and Precautions
  - Students are responsible for the general care of their laptop.
  - No food or drink is permitted near a laptop.
  - Cords, cables, and removable storage devices must be inserted carefully into the laptop.
  - Laptops must have an Antietam School District tag on them at all times and this tag may not be removed or altered in any way.
  - Laptops should never be left in a car because of the potential for damaging heat.
- Carrying Laptops
  - Transport laptops and power supplies with care and ALWAYS in the district-issued bag.
  - Laptop lids should always be closed and tightly secured when moving.
  - Never move a laptop by lifting from the screen; always support the laptop from underneath when the lid is closed.
  - Do not lean or put pressure on the top of the Laptop when it is closed.
  - Nothing should be placed on top of the laptop.
- Screen Care
  - Do not store the laptop with the screen in the open position.
  - Do not poke the screen with anything that will mark or scratch the screen surface.
  - Do not place anything on the keyboard before closing the lid (e.g. pens, pencils, or disks.)

- Clean the screen with a soft, dry microfiber cloth or anti-static cloth.
- Reporting Problems/ Damage
  - Report any issues or problems with the laptop to the AVA supervisor. The device may need to be brought into the district office for tech help based on the needs of the request.
  - Do not take district-issued laptops to an outside computer service for any type of repairs or maintenance. Additionally, power chargers must be purchased through the district only.

### Damage Fee Structure

#### Fees for Damage, Vandalism, Loss or Theft

- Parents and guardians of students in AVA will be held financially responsible for all damages, loss or theft of the Laptop while the device is in the possession, custody or control of student in accordance with the offense fees below:

<b>Incident Type</b>	<b>Fees</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Damage Offense	\$25.00
2 <sup>nd</sup> Damage Offense	\$25.00
3 <sup>rd</sup> Damage Offense	Cost of full replacement of device
Act of Vandalism Offense	Cost of full replacement of device
Loss or Theft Event	Cost of full replacement of device

### Guidelines for Stolen or Lost Laptops

- In the event a student is not on district property when a laptop is either lost or stolen, notify the AVA supervisor immediately so anti-theft and tracking software can be utilized.
- If the laptop is believed to be stolen, a police report is needed to be covered under the insurance umbrella.

### Managing and Saving Digital Work

Google Drive: Google Drive stores a suite of office productivity software (Docs, Slides, Drawings, Sheets, Forms, Keep and more) that lets you create different kinds of online documents, work on them in real time with other people, and store your documents and your other files -- all online accessible through any device connected to the Internet. All file types can be stored online in Google Drive.

### Account Access and Security

- Students are required to use their [Antietamsd.org](http://Antietamsd.org) domain user ID and password to sign into the district- issued Laptop and are required to keep that password confidential.
- Students will be issued an Antietam Google Account to participate in communications with staff and students.

### Required Signatures

- AVA Student-Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form
- Student Use, Rights and Responsibilities for District-Issued Technology Acknowledgement Form



## **Antietam School District Antietam Virtual Academy Student-Parent Agreement**

*The primary goal of the Antietam Virtual Academy is to provide our students with the flexibility of an online educational setting, while providing a quality education. A quality education through this mode of instruction can only be achieved if the student is doing his or her part in actively participating in the courses and responsibly reacting to challenges as they arise.*

### **Student Participation**

I have read and agree to comply with the guidelines described in the *Antietam Virtual Academy Student-Parent Handbook* in regards to my participation in the Antietam Virtual Academy and its online courses. Further, I agree to put forth my best effort and attend regularly to be successful as an AVA and ASD student. I agree to contact the Supervisor with any questions or concerns.

### **Parent/Guardian Participation**

I have read and agree to comply with the guidelines described in the *Antietam Virtual Academy Student-Parent Handbook* in regards to my student's participation in the Antietam Virtual Academy and its online courses. I agree to monitor my child's attendance and completion of coursework. Finally, I agree to contact the Supervisor with any questions or concerns.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_