STUDENT HANDBOOK

2026-2027

Approved 2026-27 School Year

(Subject to Board Approval & Possible Future Revisions)

Valley Virtual Remote Learning Academy is a community school established under Chapter 3314. of the Revised Code. The school is a public school and students enrolled in and attending the school are required to take proficiency tests and other examinations prescribed by law. In addition, there may be other requirements for students at the school that are prescribed by law. Students who have been excused from the compulsory attendance law for the purpose of home education as defined by the Administrative Code shall no longer be excused for that purpose upon their enrollment in a community school. For more information about this matter, contact the school administration or the Ohio Department of Education.

Mission Statement of Valley Virtual Remote Learning Academy

Valley Virtual Remote Learning Academy, an online public charter school, strives to foster nurturing partnerships among parents, students, staff, and school districts collaborating to provide quality, educational opportunities that align to state standards for students who benefit from learning in a non-traditional setting.

Philosophy

All students can learn given optimum learning experiences. The school is dedicated to customizing learning opportunities for all students so that they become successful learners guided by high expectations.

Location

ESC of Eastern Ohio
7320 N. Palmyra Road
Canfield, Ohio 44406
Phone: 330-533-8755
Fax: 330-729-9349
Lab Hours: Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Valley Virtual Staff

Dr. Traci Hostetler, Superintendent: T.Hostetler@esceasternohio.org
Susan Forsythe, Principal: S.Forsythe@valleyvirtual.org
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The staff at Valley Virtual Remote Learning Academy believes that all students can learn and deserve a safe, supportive environment in which they feel welcome. It is our expectation that our students will **L**earn, **E**ngage, **A**ttend, and **P**articipate.



Roles and Responsibilities

What is the Parent/Guardian's Role?

Parents and guardians are essential partners in their student's educational success. At Valley Virtual, families play an active role in supporting student learning by monitoring academic progress, encouraging consistent engagement, and maintaining communication with school staff.

Parents and guardians are expected to:

- Students and parents/guardians are expected to regularly monitor all communication platforms.
- Ensure their student has regular access to the technology and resources needed for learning.
- Monitor student progress, attendance, and course completion through available school platforms.
- Encourage daily participation in coursework, lessons, and school communications.
- Communicate with teachers and school staff when academic concerns arise.
- Respond to school outreach regarding student progress, attendance, or academic performance.
- Support the development of organizational, time-management, and study skills.
- Participate in meetings and intervention plans when additional academic support is needed.
- Work collaboratively with school staff to help students meet graduation and academic goals.
- One parent/guardian must attend and participate in the student's orientation

What is the Student's Role?

Students are responsible for taking ownership of their learning and actively participating in their education. Success in a virtual environment requires self-motivation, accountability, communication, and consistent effort.

Students are expected to:

- Log in a minimum of 27 hours per week while engaged in coursework according to school expectations.
- Complete assignments, assessments, and learning activities by established deadlines.
- Monitor their academic progress and seek assistance when needed.
- Communicate respectfully with all staff regarding questions, concerns, or challenges.
- Attend required orientation, state testing, virtual meetings, interventions, and school activities.
- Check school email and other communication platforms **daily**.
- Utilize available academic resources and support services.
- Demonstrate integrity by completing their own work and following academic honesty guidelines.
- Work toward individual academic, career, and graduation goals in alignment with student success plan.

What is the Staff's Role?

The staff at Valley Virtual is committed to providing high-quality educational opportunities and academic support to help students succeed.

Staff members are expected to:

- Establish clear learning objectives, expectations, and deadlines.
- Monitor student progress and provide timely feedback.
- Communicate regularly with students and families regarding academic performance and progress.
- Provide interventions and support when students experience academic challenges.
- Encourage student growth, goal setting, and self-advocacy.
- Connect students with appropriate resources and support services.
- Foster a positive, inclusive, and supportive learning environment.
- Collaborate with families to help students achieve academic success and graduation requirements.

Enrollment Procedure

1) A application will be completed using www.finalforms.com
2) Once the application and all required documents are received, Valley Virtual will contact the parent/guardian to schedule a mandatory enrollment session. The enrollment session will be attended in person with the student and the parent/guardian.
3) The student's first day of school at Valley Virtual will be the day the orientation session is attended.
4) If you are unable to attend your scheduled orientation, it is your responsibility to to call and reschedule a new appointment. If three sessions are missed, your student will be unable to enroll at Valley Virtual and their home school will be notified.

Withdrawal Procedure

- Enroll in new district (new district will send VV a records request).
- Complete a Valley Virtual withdrawal form and return all technology equipment. If the equipment is not returned, student transcripts will not be released. Parent/Guardian will be billed for any missing items.

A student's enrollment in Valley Virtual Remote Learning Academy shall cease on the day any of the following occur:

- Valley Virtual receives documentation from a parent/guardian terminating enrollment of the student;
- Valley Virtual is provided documentation of a student's enrollment in another public or nonpublic school;
- Valley Virtual ceases to offer learning opportunities to the student;
- Valley Virtual, pursuant to attendance policies, has invoked a forced withdrawal for failure to participate in learning opportunities offered to the student. These policies include expulsion: based on Valley Virtual policies and regulations.

Equal Education Opportunity

Valley Virtual Remote Learning Academy provides a free education to Ohio residents between the ages of 14 and 21 (grades 9 -12) who do not possess a valid high school diploma. All state and federal regulations applying to Community Schools will be followed.

Valley Virtual Remote Learning Academy commits that there will be no discrimination in the admission of students to the school on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, English proficiency, disability, or socio-economic status. Upon admission of any handicapped student, Valley Virtual Remote Learning Academy will comply with all federal and state laws regarding the education of handicapped students. Valley Virtual Remote Learning Academy does not limit admission to students on the basis of intellectual ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, or athletic ability.

Attendance Requirements

In accordance with Ohio Revised Code, all Valley Virtual Students are required to attend 27 hours per week during the school year to accumulate a minimum of 920 hours per school year.

Excused Absence: The Board acknowledges there are times when a student simply cannot be at school. The Board considers the following factors to be reasonable excuses for time missed at school:

1. Illness of the child, which may require a written physician's statement
2. Illness in the family necessitating the presence of the child
3. Quarantine in the home
4. Death of a relative
5. Medical, behavioral, or dental appointment. Coming to school before and/or after the appointment is recommended
6. Observance of religious holidays, when outside "Religious Expression" below
7. Pre-enlistment reporting to military enlistment processing station, unless used to help fulfill graduation requirements and will be counted as "present" for school
8. Absences due to a child's placement in foster care or change in foster care placement or any court proceedings related to the child's foster care status
9. Absences due to a student experiencing homelessness, defined as a student who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence
10. Children of military families. Absences due to deployment activities of a parent, legal guardian, or custodian
11. Emergency or other set of circumstances in which the judgment of the superintendent of schools constitutes a good and sufficient cause for absence from school

The parent, legal guardian, or custodian must provide an explanation for the absence, which shall be recorded by the approving authority of the school and shall include the date and time of the absence according to local policy.

Religious Expression: A student may have up to three days excused for religious expression. To receive these days, the building principal must receive written notice from the student's parent or guardian within 14 days of the

beginning of the school year or within 14 days of the student's enrollment date. A student absent in this way may still participate in after-school activities. The student will also receive reasonable accommodations for any academic requirement or testing missed.

A non-exhaustive list of major religious holidays, festivals, and religious observances is available on the district's website.

Postsecondary Visitation: Students are encouraged to explore postsecondary options (such as technical college or university), and sometimes this must happen during the school day. Parents and guardians must coordinate with their child's building administrator to receive approval and discuss accommodations before each visit. With building approval, each student will be marked as "present" for school for up to three days each school year.

Extracurricular Activities: In-state events sponsored by the district may be considered instructional opportunities for students. The superintendent or designee may determine under what conditions these opportunities allow for a participating student to be marked as "present" for school.

Habitual Truancy: Any student who is absent without legitimate excuse from the public school the child is supposed to attend for **30 or more consecutive hours, 42 or more hours in one school month, or 72 or more hours in one school year,** unless the student's district or school determines the student and student's family are making satisfactory progress in improving the student's attendance at school. However, if the student and the student's family cease to continue making progress in improving the student's attendance, a complaint in the juvenile court shall be filed.

Assessment/Testing

All students must participate in the required state testing. This is a requirement for graduation. All state testing must be completed in person.

Valley Virtual students must take the following state-mandated tests:

• STAR Testing will be administered to students two (2) times a year (fall & spring) to monitor progress and determine educational mastery levels. These tests help the staff to determine instructional needs. These tests are required to be completed in person.

• End of Course (EOC) tests will be administered two (2) times per year (fall & spring.) Students will be scheduled for EOC tests for classes they have completed or nearly completed.

• ACT assessments are used by colleges and universities in admissions decisions. Valley Virtual Remote Learning Academy offers an *optional* opportunity to take the ACT one time at no cost to students in 11th grade. If a student does not want to take the ACT as an 11th grader, a parent or guardian **must** complete and return the ACT OPT-OUT Form as directed.

CONSEQUENCE OF FAILURE TO TEST

All students must participate in the required state testing. Per House Bill 66, Section 3314.26 ORC, students who fail to participate in required testing two (2) consecutive years will not be permitted to attend any online school in Ohio.

State Testing Schedule

2026-2027

FALL 2026 (Juniors & Seniors Only As Needed)

Monday 11/30/26
Wednesday 12/2/26
Friday 12/4/26
Wednesday 12/9/26
Friday 12/11/26

SPRING 2027

ELA	**MATH, SCIENCE, SOCIAL STUDIES**
Tuesday 3/30/27	Monday 4/5/27
Thursday 4/1/27	Wednesday 4/7/27
Monday 4/5/27	Friday 4/9/27
Wednesday 4/7/27	Tuesday 4/13/27
Friday 4/9/27	Wednesday 4/14/27
Tuesday 4/13/27	Friday 4/16/27
Wednesday 4/14/27	Monday 4/19/27
Friday 4/16/27	Wednesday 4/21/27
	Friday 4/23/27

Grading /Report Cards

The Valley Virtual report cards are available online through our online curriculum. Parents will be issued a username and password to and instructed on how to access the student's grades. Final report cards will be mailed at the end of the school year.

Grading Scale

A 100-90
B 89-80
C 79-70
D 69-60
F Below 60

Work Submission Expectations

- Automatic Removal: Zero Attendance Hours AND/OR Zero Units Submitted for 72 hours

Work Submission Expectation: ***MINIMUM*** **1 unit, per course, per week** (example below)
(*Credit Recovery Students: Up to 5 Courses ONLY)*

*(*Note: Minimum work submission expectations for students who arrive later in the year will be determined on a case-by-case basis by Learning Mentors, with the Principal's approval.)*

Week of School	Submission Expectation
Week 3	3 units per course
Week 6	6 units per course
Week 9	9 units per course

- Students who fall below the minimum work submission expectations listed above will work with their Learning Mentor (and VV Attendance Team, as appropriate) to get caught up, as outlined below:

1. First Occurrence:
    a. Student and parent/guardian must attend a **phone conference** with Learning Mentor to avoid the VLA account being locked. Parent/guardian will be notified via email to set up a phone conference within 3 school days.
        i. If parent/student does not set up phone meeting within 3 school days of emailed request, VLA account will be locked.
        ii. If account remains locked due to lack of response and student is approaching the 72 hour withdrawal period, an additional email will be sent to notify student of pending withdrawal.
2. Second Occurrence:
    a. VLA Account locked until student and parent/guardian attend a **zoom conference** with Learning Mentor.
    b. Social Worker may be included in attendance intervention plan if a need is determined.
    c. If account remains locked due to lack of response and student is approaching the 72 hour withdrawal period, an additional email will be sent to notify student of pending withdrawal.
3. Third Occurrence:
    a. Account locked until student & parent/guardian attend an **in-person meeting** with Learning Mentor, Social Worker, and Career Counselor (VV Attendance Team).
    b. Social Worker will increase intensity of attendance intervention plan, which may include enrollment in the Cartwheel School Aversion program, and/or referral to truancy court.
    c. Parent/guardian and student will meet with Career Counselor to revisit, update, and strengthen success plan.
    d. *Until student is caught up to* ***at least half of the expected units*****:**

i. Students **must work in the lab (in-person)** as determined by the VV Attendance Team based on the amount of work deficient.
ii. Administration will revoke (or not sign new) work permits, dance/prom forms, sports participation forms, OHSAA forms, Drive to Succeed letters of recommendation, etc.

e. If account remains locked due to lack of response and student is approaching the 72 hour withdrawal period, an additional email will be sent to notify student of pending withdrawal.
f. Students who are non-compliant with above listed requirements (a-d) will be referred to the truancy court.

4. **Fourth Occurrence**: Removal from Valley Virtual.

Reenrollment:
Students can be re-enrolled into Valley Virtual ONLY:

- With the approval of the VV Attendance Team: Principal, Learning Mentor, Teacher(s,) Social Worker, Career Counselor.
- If the student and parent/guardian agrees that the student will work in the lab (as determined by the Attendance Team) until the student is fully caught up to the weekly expectations as listed above.

Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) Services

Students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) receive specialized support designed to help them make progress toward their individualized goals and successfully access the general education curriculum. In a virtual learning environment, regular participation in Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) services is essential to student success.

Students with IEPs are required to attend scheduled SDI sessions led by our Intervention Specialists. These live virtual sessions are designed to address each student's IEP goals, provide individualized instruction, and support students in completing and understanding their coursework.

Students are expected to attend their SDI sessions weekly as scheduled by their Intervention Specialist. During each session, students must have their cameras on and actively participate through speaking, reading, writing, and other instructional activities as appropriate.

The schedule and frequency of SDI sessions will be determined and communicated by the Intervention Specialists in accordance with each student's IEP services. Regular attendance and participation are expected to ensure students receive the support necessary to achieve their educational goals.

Literacy Intervention Program

Success in a virtual high school environment depends heavily on students' ability to independently read and comprehend online course materials, communicate effectively in writing, and actively engage in academic discussions. Strong literacy skills are essential for navigating digital coursework, completing assignments, and demonstrating mastery of course content.

Students who demonstrate a need for literacy intervention, as determined by Universal Screening measures (STAR) and/or Literacy Diagnostic Assessments (including, but not limited to, Oral Reading Fluency, San Diego Quick Assessment, MAZE, and other literacy measures), will be enrolled in a mandatory Literacy Intervention Program.

Literacy Intervention groups meet twice weekly through live virtual Zoom sessions led by our Literacy Coach. Attendance at these sessions is required. Students must join each session with their cameras on and are expected to actively participate through reading, speaking, and writing activities.

Because consistent attendance and engagement are critical to student growth, students who attend the Literacy Intervention sessions with no more than four (4) absences during the course will earn one-half (.5) elective credit.

Leopard Literacy Lab — Attendance and Participation Policy

Enrollment in the Leopard Literacy Lab is a scheduled course placement, based on assessment data, and carries the same attendance and participation expectations as all courses offered by the district. Students are required to attend all scheduled live sessions and actively engage in assigned coursework in accordance with the course requirements outlined in the course description.

Consistent attendance and meaningful participation are essential to the instructional design of this program and are required for course credit. Failure to meet attendance requirements, complete assigned coursework, or engage in the course as outlined may result in loss of credit and could be subject to the district's established intervention process.

Students who do not meet course expectations despite documented intervention efforts may be subject to removal from the course in accordance with district policy. Continued non-compliance with attendance and academic expectations may result in further disciplinary action, up to and including consequences outlined in the district's Code of Student Conduct.

Parents and guardians will be notified in the event that a student is at risk of removal, and every reasonable effort will be made to support student success prior to any such action. All decisions regarding course removal will be made in accordance with applicable state law, district board policy, and due process procedures.

Exact Path Learning Program

To support academic growth and provide individualized instruction, all students will be enrolled in Exact Path, a digital learning program that delivers personalized learning pathways in reading and mathematics based on each student's academic needs.

Participation in Exact Path is a required component of the school's instructional program. Students are expected to engage consistently with the program to strengthen foundational skills, address learning gaps, and support success in their coursework.

All students must complete a minimum of 60 minutes per week in Exact Path Reading and 60 minutes per week in Exact Path Math, for a total of 120 minutes (2 hours) of Exact Path instruction each week. Students may complete these minutes at times that best fit their schedules; however, the weekly time requirement must be met to remain in compliance with program expectations.

Student progress and participation in Exact Path will be monitored regularly by school staff. Consistent engagement with the program is essential to maximizing academic growth and ensuring students receive the full benefit of this personalized learning resource.

Graduation

Ohio Revised Code section 3313.618
Students in the classes of 2023 to 2029 (those who entered grade 9 on or after July 1, 2019) are now required to meet a new set of graduation requirements. These new graduation requirements consist of three key components:

1. Course Completion

Students will satisfy Ohio's curriculum requirements and any additional local requirements. Students will complete the state minimum 20 units, with specific units required in each content area.
Demonstrating Competency

2. Demonstrating Competency

Students will demonstrate competency in the foundation areas of English language arts and mathematics or through alternative demonstrations, which include College Credit Plus, career- focused activities, their ACT or SAT scores, or military enlistment.

3. Demonstrating Readiness (Seals)

Students will demonstrate readiness for their post-high school paths by earning at least two diploma seals that allow them to demonstrate important foundational and well- rounded academic and technical knowledge, professional skills, as well as leadership and reasoning skills.

******Class of 2030 and beyond will have alternative graduation requirements that will be announced in coming months. We will have updates regarding the class of 2030 and beyond as soon as possible. ******

Communication Expectations

Effective communication between students, parents/guardians, and Valley Virtual staff is essential to student success in a virtual learning environment. Because students and families are not physically present in a school building each day, timely and respectful communication plays a critical role in supporting academic progress and addressing concerns.

All communication between Valley Virtual staff, students, and parents/guardians is expected to be **respectful, professional, and courteous**. Valley Virtual is committed to maintaining positive partnerships with families and expects the same level of respect in all interactions, whether they occur through email, Class Dojo, phone calls, virtual meetings, or other school-approved communication methods.

Valley Virtual staff will make **every reasonable effort to respond to student and parent/guardian communications within twenty-four (24) school hours.** School hours do not include evenings, weekends, holidays, school breaks, or other non-school days. Valley Virtual phones are monitored between the hours of 8am and 3:30pm on regularly scheduled school days.

Likewise, students and parents/guardians are expected to respond to communications from Valley Virtual staff within twenty-four (24) school hours whenever possible. Timely responses help ensure that questions, concerns, attendance issues, academic needs, and other important matters can be addressed promptly.

As a virtual school, Valley Virtual has limited methods of communication with families. Primary communication methods include Class Dojo, email, and telephone calls. **Students and parents/guardians are expected to regularly monitor these communication platforms and are strongly encouraged to check Class Dojo and email daily.** At a minimum, Class Dojo and email should be checked at least once per week to ensure that important school information, announcements, and communications are received in a timely manner.

Failure to monitor school communications may result in missed information regarding academic progress, attendance, school events, deadlines, or other important matters. Maintaining open and timely communication is a shared responsibility between the school and families and is essential to supporting student success.

Forms, Documentation, and Transcript Requests

Throughout the school year, students and parents/guardians may need Valley Virtual staff to complete forms, provide documentation, verify enrollment, or process records requests, such as:

- transcript requests
- grade verification forms
- Social Security documentation
- work permits
- driver's education forms
- college or scholarship paperwork
- prom or school dance forms
- enrollment verification forms
- other school-related documents

To ensure that all requests are handled accurately and efficiently, adequate processing time is required.Students and parents/guardians **must allow a minimum of forty-eight (48) school hours** for Valley Virtual staff to complete any requested forms, paperwork, documentation, enrollment verifications, letters, recommendations, records requests, or transcript requests. Requests are *processed during regular school business hours and do not include weekends, holidays, school breaks, or days when school is not in session.*

To avoid delays, students and parents/guardians are encouraged to submit requests well in advance of any

deadlines. While Valley Virtual staff will make every effort to accommodate time-sensitive requests, **completion within less than 48 school hours cannot be guaranteed**.

Requests submitted with insufficient notice may not be completed before the requested deadline. *Students and families are responsible for planning accordingly and allowing adequate time for processing.*

ALL REQUESTS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO S.FORSYTHE@VALLEYVIRTUAL.ORG

Internet Reimbursement Program

As a virtual school, Valley Virtual recognizes that reliable internet access is essential for student success. To help offset the cost of internet service, eligible families may qualify for reimbursement of internet expenses.

Students must maintain an attendance rate of 80% or higher and successfully stay on track and pass all enrolled courses during the school year to be eligible for internet reimbursement. Families of eligible students may receive reimbursement for internet service costs of up to $50 per month, subject to program requirements and available funding.

Eligibility for reimbursement is determined after the conclusion of the school year based on final attendance and course completion records. Students and families who meet the eligibility requirements will be notified by the school following the end of the school year.

Eligible families will receive an email outlining the reimbursement process, required documentation, submission procedures, and applicable deadlines. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to submit all required documentation by the stated deadline in order to receive reimbursement.

Failure to meet the attendance and course passage requirements or to submit the required documentation by the deadline may result in forfeiture of reimbursement eligibility.

Computer Lab Expectations

Lab Hours

- Monday–Thursday: 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Friday (or the last school day of the week): 8:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Our computer lab is a shared academic space designed for learning, testing, and collaboration. Please help us maintain an environment where everyone can be successful.

Students are expected to:

- Enter the lab quietly and be mindful that others may be working or testing.
- Sign in when entering and sign out before leaving.
- Use only your own account and keep your passwords private.
- Use the first available computer or the workstation assigned by staff.
- Respect others' space and equipment—do not use another student's computer, mouse, or keyboard.

- Stay focused on school-related work while in the lab.
- Use the internet appropriately and only for educational purposes.
- Check personal email, social media, games, and entertainment sites outside of school hours.
- Ask staff permission before printing non-school-related materials.
- Clean your workspace before leaving.
- Be respectful of staff and classmates at all times. Bullying, harassment, or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.

Food and Drinks

Food and drinks are permitted at your own risk. Students may be held financially responsible for damage caused to school equipment as a result of spills or misuse.

Dress Code

Valley Virtual recognizes that students learn best when they can be comfortable and express their individuality. Our dress code is intended to support a safe, respectful, and distraction-free learning environment rather than regulate personal style.

Students attending in-person labs, testing sessions, school events, or live virtual lessons should wear clothing that is appropriate for a school setting.

Please follow these guidelines:

- Clothing should provide appropriate coverage of private areas.
- Shoes are required during all in-person activities.
- Clothing and accessories may not display profanity, hate speech, discriminatory language, sexually explicit content, or references to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vaping, or violence.
- Attire that creates a safety concern or substantially disrupts the learning environment is not permitted.
- Hats, hoodies, and athletic wear are permitted unless a staff member requests their removal for safety, identification, testing requirements, or participation purposes. Hoods must be down during any mandated assessments.

Substance-Free School Policy

Valley Virtual is committed to maintaining a safe, healthy, and drug-free learning environment for all students, staff, and visitors. The use, possession, sale, distribution, or being under the influence of prohibited substances is inconsistent with the educational mission of the school and will not be tolerated.

This policy applies to all school property, in-person labs, testing sessions, school-sponsored activities, and any event under the supervision or control of the school.

Tobacco and Nicotine Products

In accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 3313.751, students are prohibited from smoking, using, vaping, or possessing tobacco or nicotine-containing products while on school property or participating in any school-sponsored activity. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to:

- Cigarettes;
- Cigars;
- Smokeless tobacco products;

- Electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes);
- Vape devices and vape cartridges;
- Alternative nicotine products; and
- Any other substance containing tobacco or nicotine.

Ohio law states that no student shall smoke, use tobacco, or possess any substance containing tobacco in any area under the control of a school district or educational service center or at any school-supervised activity.

Alcohol, Marijuana, and Drugs

Students shall not possess, use, distribute, sell, transmit, conceal, or be under the influence of:

- Alcohol;
- Marijuana or cannabis products;
- Illegal drugs or controlled substances;
- Drug paraphernalia;
- Look-alike drugs;
- Unauthorized prescription medications; or
- Any substance used in a manner inconsistent with its intended purpose to produce intoxication or impairment.

Although certain substances, including marijuana, may be legal for some adults under Ohio law, they remain strictly prohibited on school property and during school-sponsored activities.

Prescription medications authorized by a licensed healthcare provider must be managed in accordance with school medication procedures and applicable state law.

Consequences for Violations

Violations of this policy are considered serious offenses and may result in disciplinary action consistent with the Student Code of Conduct. Consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- Removal from the activity or school-sponsored event;
- Parent or guardian notification;
- Referral to administration;
- Referral to counseling, educational interventions, or substance abuse resources; and
- Notification of and involvement of local law enforcement authorities when required or deemed appropriate.

Students who possess, distribute, sell, or use prohibited substances on school property or at school-sponsored events may be subject to criminal penalties in addition to school disciplinary consequences.

Commitment to Student Well-Being

Valley Virtual recognizes that substance use may sometimes indicate a need for support and intervention. Whenever appropriate, the school will work collaboratively with students and families to connect them with educational resources and community support while maintaining a safe learning environment for all members of the school community.

Cell Phone and Electronic Device Policy

Valley Virtual recognizes that cell phones and other electronic communication devices are an important part of students' daily lives. As a virtual school, students may rely on technology to communicate with their families, manage schedules, and access certain educational resources. We also understand that learning from home can present unique challenges that differ from a traditional school setting.

At the same time, students are expected to maintain their focus on learning during instructional time.

In accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 3313.753, Valley Virtual has adopted the following expectations regarding student use of cell phones and electronic communication devices. Ohio law requires school districts to establish policies that limit student cell phone use during school hours and reduce distractions that interfere with learning. The intent of this policy is to support student engagement, academic success, and a productive learning environment.

During In-Person Labs and School-Sponsored Activities

Students attending in-person labs, testing sessions, meetings, or other school-sponsored activities are expected to keep cell phones and personal electronic devices silenced and out of sight during instructional time unless specifically authorized by a staff member for an educational purpose.

Cell phones may not be used for texting, social media, gaming, video streaming, phone calls, photography, or other non-academic purposes while instruction is taking place. Limiting these distractions allows students to fully participate in learning opportunities and respects the learning environment of others.

If a student needs to contact a parent or guardian during an in-person school activity, they should request permission from a staff member. Likewise, parents and guardians who need to reach their student during the school day should contact the school lab when appropriate. (330) 533-8755

During Virtual Instruction

Because Valley Virtual students complete coursework in a virtual setting, students may have access to personal devices while learning from home. Students are expected to use sound judgment and self-discipline by limiting cell phone use during instructional activities, live sessions, assessments, and independent work time.

Students should prioritize academic responsibilities by:

- Minimizing notifications and distractions while working;
- Participating fully in live lessons and required meetings;
- Completing assignments with integrity and attention;
- Using technology to support, rather than hinder, their learning.

Exceptions

Exceptions to this policy may be made:

- When a staff member authorizes the use of a device for an instructional activity;
- When the use of a device is required by a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Plan;
- To monitor or address a documented health concern in accordance with applicable law and school procedures; or
- In emergency situations as directed by school personnel.

Policy Violations

Students who do not follow these expectations during in-person instructional activities may be subject to progressive disciplinary consequences, including verbal reminders, redirection, temporary confiscation of the device for the duration of the activity, parent/guardian notification, or additional disciplinary action consistent with the Student Code of Conduct.

Valley Virtual believes that responsible technology use is an important life skill. By working together, students, families, and staff can create learning environments—both virtual and in person—that maximize engagement, minimize distractions, and support academic success.

Live Lesson and Zoom Session Expectations

Live Zoom sessions provide students with opportunities to receive instruction, participate in discussions, collaborate with peers, and build meaningful connections with teachers and classmates. To ensure a safe, productive, and engaging learning environment, students are expected to follow the guidelines below during all live virtual sessions.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance in a live session requires more than simply logging in. Students are expected to be actively engaged throughout the lesson by:

- Arriving on time and remaining in the session for its duration.
- Participating in discussions, activities, polls, and other learning opportunities.
- Responding to teacher questions and directions.
- Utilizing the chat feature appropriately when instructed.
- Demonstrating respectful and appropriate communication with teachers and peers.

Students who are logged in but not participating may be marked absent or unexcused for the session at the teacher's discretion.

Camera Expectations

To support student safety, attendance verification, engagement, and meaningful interaction, students are required to have their camera turned on during live Zoom sessions.

Visible participation allows staff to:

- Verify student attendance and identity.
- Ensure student safety and well-being during instructional time.
- Foster a positive and collaborative learning environment.
- Monitor engagement and provide appropriate academic support.

Students should position themselves in a location that is appropriate for learning and free from unnecessary distractions whenever possible.

If a student's camera is not on during a live session, the teacher will provide a reminder and an opportunity for the student to comply with the expectation.

Students who fail to turn on their camera after being directed to do so may be removed from the session and may not receive attendance credit for that instructional period. Repeated violations may result in parent/guardian contact and additional interventions to address participation concerns.

Audio and Technology Expectations

Students should:

- Keep microphones muted unless speaking or directed otherwise by the teacher.
- Use school-appropriate language and behavior at all times.
- Avoid participating while engaged in other activities that interfere with learning.
- Ensure that usernames, profile pictures, backgrounds, and screen names are accurate and school appropriate.

Respectful Learning Environment

Students are expected to contribute to a positive virtual classroom environment by:

- Treating others with respect and courtesy.
- Listening when others are speaking.
- Using chat features appropriately and for educational purposes.
- Refraining from recording, photographing, screenshotting, or sharing any part of a live session without prior school authorization.

Exceptions

The school recognizes that individual circumstances may occasionally affect a student's ability to use a camera. Requests for accommodations due to documented medical or other approved circumstances should be discussed with school administration in advance.

By participating in live lessons, students agree to follow these expectations and contribute to a safe, respectful, and academically focused virtual learning environment.

AI in Education

PURPOSE STATEMENT

To support students and educators in the use of artificial intelligence (AI) for educational and operational purposes, the Board of Education of Valley Virtual has created this policy on the use of AI. The purpose of this policy is to prepare students for success, encourage innovation for classroom instruction, and embrace opportunities for operational efficiency, while providing for consistent expectations, standards, and approval processes for safe and responsible implementation and integration of AI. This applies to multiple use cases, applications, and integration of AI, including generative AI.

DEFINITIONS

Artificial intelligence (AI): A machine-based system that can, for a given set of human-defined objectives, make predictions, recommendations, or decisions influencing real or virtual environments. Artificial intelligence systems use machine- and human-based inputs to perceive real and virtual environments; abstract such perceptions into models through analysis in an automated manner; and use model inference to formulate options for information or action.[1]

Generative AI: Any internet-based generative artificial intelligence programs that make use of large language model algorithms to make something new. AI used for auto-complete, minor text predictions, and/or grammar/spelling/punctuation suggestions, commonly found in most word-processing applications, is not considered generative AI.[2]

AI tool: AI applications, algorithms, or systems that make use of AI to generate outputs based on human inputs, with an emphasis on generative AI.[3]

AI LITERACY

The Board recognizes the importance of preparing students and educators for the successful integration of innovative technologies. Accordingly, it is the policy of the Board that Valley Virtual responsibly integrate AI by building AI literacy for all students and educators, including integration of AI into relevant curriculum, professional learning opportunities, and safe and responsible usage.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

An ongoing AI workgroup shall be convened to inform AI policy and implementation. The workgroup should include educators who are representative of grade levels and departments, including special education and related services professionals, other relevant staff, Board members, and students, as well as external representatives such as local businesses and postsecondary institutions. Educators and staff should be given the opportunity to explore and gain experience with applications and integrated approaches to achieving Valley Virtual priorities. The workgroup should regularly review new research and guidance and provide ongoing feedback to Valley Virtual.

Parents and community members should be informed through ongoing engagement about the skills students need for the future workforce and how AI is being used in the classroom. Educational resources may be provided to empower families to understand the potential risks associated with the unsupervised use of AI tools. Regular AI updates, including use of tools and opportunities for feedback, shall be integrated into the existing family and community engagement strategy.

DATA PRIVACY AND SECURITY

Valley Virtual is committed to protecting the privacy and security of all student and staff data. The adoption and implementation of any AI tool must adhere to existing data privacy and security policies that include, but are not limited to, Personally Identifiable Information (PII), FERPA, and any other relevant state of Ohio and federal laws. AI tools should only access, store, or process data that is necessary, and must do so in a secure, transparent, and ethical manner. AI systems must be vetted to ensure they meet rigorous standards for data encryption, access control, and responsible data use.
Users must also follow the terms of service, including appropriate age limits.

PROCUREMENT AND EVALUATION OF AI TOOLS

The adoption of AI-enabled tools should be conducted in accordance with existing procurement policies and in alignment to Valley Virtual core values, goals, and priorities. Selection procedures must ensure that any AI tool must adhere to data privacy and security policies. Evaluation of tools must also address alignment to instructional and operational goals, accessibility, and cost. All third-party vendors providing AI tools must comply with Valley Virtual standards, state and federal law for data protection, ethical use, and accessibility.

ETHICAL USE OF AI

It is the policy of Valley Virtual that the design and implementation of AI be safe, responsible, and keep people at the core of every AI-related decision. AI implementation should be human-centered and should empower students, educators, and communities. It is a tool to support learning and teaching, not a substitute for student effort or the role of the educator. Accordingly, users should critically analyze AI output, respect safeguards and rules, and be transparent about its use.

ACCEPTABLE USE

Valley Virtual recognizes that responsible and appropriate uses of AI by students and educators will vary depending on the context, including but not limited to grade level, subject, and/or the nature of the classroom activity or assignment.
Expectations for acceptable student uses should be clearly articulated by educators in alignment with policy and guided by the specific requirements for an assignment or activity. This includes specifying AI use expectations in course syllabi and assignment instructions when relevant. These expectations should clearly articulate the expectations of use, types of relevant assignments where AI use is acceptable, and required format for references.

Educators should consider the impact on learning objectives and assessment of student learning when designing related instruction and classroom activities. No assignment shall require the use of a tool that cannot be provided by Valley Virtual. AI tools approved for use should be clearly communicated.

Expectations for educator, staff, and third-party use should align with Valley Virtual priorities. Educator use should be in alignment with the Licensure Code of Conduct for Ohio's Educators. Educators and staff must model appropriate acceptable use practices when using AI tools for instructional and operational uses.

Use of tools that have not been approved is not permitted.

All users are expected to employ AI tools solely for educational and related operational purposes, upholding values of respect and academic integrity, and in alignment with other related Valley Virtual policies. Using AI tools for bullying, harassment, and any form of intimidation is strictly prohibited and should be addressed in alignment with existing behavior and discipline policies.

Students and staff with concerns regarding inappropriate use that violates Valley Virtual policies and/or applicable state or federal laws should contact the Superintendent or appropriate designated staff member.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Board recognizes that the responsible use of AI requires the highest standards of academic integrity with clear expectations for students, educators, and staff regarding the ethical use of AI tools.

AI-enabled tools may be used to support student work (such as brainstorming or feedback), but AI-generated work must not replace student work. Students are expected to complete assignments and assessments in a manner that reflects their own understanding and effort, critically analyze AI-generated content and not misrepresent it as original work, and use proper citations and references for AI-assisted work according to existing policies and expectations relevant to assignments (such as APA or MLA style formats).

Valley Virtual should specify procedures for investigating and addressing suspected misuse in alignment with existing academic integrity policies.

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

Valley Virtual, in partnership with Valley Virtual's ongoing AI workgroup, will monitor developments in AI technology and update policies to address emerging risks. This policy should be reviewed often for effectiveness; alignment to district, school, educator and student needs; considerations of ongoing innovation; related data privacy and management policies; and impact on students including learning outcomes.

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[1] 15 U.S. Code § 9401, Sec. 3
[2] O.A.C. 3342-3-01.8(B)(15)
[3] Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA), Sample Policy EDEC: Artificial Intelligence

Student Records/Directory

The Director of Valley Virtual Remote Learning Academy is responsible for the proper administration of student records in keeping with Ohio and Federal law (see FERPA Guidance Policy included) and the records are available to parents upon request.

No personal student information will be released to an outside agency not directly involved in an official capacity with the school without written consent of the parent or guardian. Parents will be required to sign a Prohibition/Consent of Student Directory Information at orientation or within two weeks of a student's enrollment.

Student Privacy & Parental Access to Information

Valley Virtual Remote Learning Academy respects the privacy rights of parents and their children. No student shall be required, as a part of the school program, without prior written consent of the student (if an adult or an emancipated minor) or, if an unemancipated minor, his/her parents, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

a. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or his/her parents;
b. Mental or psychological problems of the student or his/her family;
c. Sex behavior or attitudes;
d. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior;
e. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships; f. Legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
g. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or his/her parents; or
h. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program).

Further, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey or evaluation created by a third party before the survey/evaluation is administered or distributed by the school to the student. The parent will have access to the survey/evaluation within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the building principal.

NONDISCRIMINATION

The nondiscrimination policy of Valley Virtual Remote Learning Academy extends to students, staff, job applicants, the general public and individuals with whom it does business and applies to race, color, national origin, citizenship status, religion, gender, economic status, age or disability.

The Board does not permit discriminatory practices and views harassment as a form of discrimination. Harassment is defined as intimidation by threats of or actual physical violence; the creation, by whatever means, of a climate of hostility or intimidation; or the use of language, conduct or symbols in such a manner as to be commonly understood to convey hatred, contempt or prejudice or to have the effect of insulting or stigmatizing an individual. Employees or students who engage in discrimination of another employee or student shall be subject to disciplinary action. Permission, consent or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to discrimination does not lessen the prohibition contained in this policy.

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF GENDER

The U.S. Department of Education has published regulations for implementing Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits sex discrimination in federally assisted education programs. Title IX states, in part: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”
The Board ensures compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the regulations promulgated through the U.S. Department of Education.

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF DISABILITY

The Board maintains that discrimination against a qualified disabled person solely on the basis of disability is unfair. To the extent possible, qualified disabled persons should be in the mainstream of life in a school community. In addition, the District is the recipient of federal funds and therefore must be in compliance with all laws and regulations which deal with disabled individuals.

Accordingly, employees of the District comply with the law and Board policy to ensure nondiscrimination on the basis of disability. The following is expected.

- No one discriminates against qualified disabled persons in any aspect of school employment solely on the basis of disability.
- Facilities, programs and activities are made available to qualified disabled persons
- Free appropriate public education at pre-school, elementary and secondary levels, including nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities, are provided to qualified disabled persons.
- No one excludes any qualified disabled person, solely on the basis of disability, from participation in any preschool education, day care, adult education or vocational education program.
- Each qualified disabled person is provided with the same health, welfare and other social services which are provided to others.

FERPA General Guidance for Parents

FERPA is a Federal law that applies to educational agencies and institutions that receive funding under a program administered by the U. S. Department of Education. Parochial and private schools at the elementary school levels do not generally receive such funding and, therefore, are not subject to FERPA. The statute is found at 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and the Department's regulations are found at 34 CFR Part 99. Under FERPA, schools must generally afford parents: -access to their children's education records -an opportunity to seek to have the records amended -some control over the disclosure of information from the records.

Parents may access, seek to amend, or consent to disclosures of their children's education records, unless there is a court order or other legal document specifically stating otherwise. When a student turns 18 years of age or attends a postsecondary institution, the student, and not the parent, may access, seek to amend, and consent to disclosures of his or her education records.

Access to Education Records:

Schools are required by FERPA to:

- provide a parent with an opportunity to inspect and review his or her child's education records within 45 days of the receipt of a request
- provide a parent with copies of education records or otherwise make the records available to the parent if the parent, for instance, lives outside of commuting distance of the school
- redact the names and other personally identifiable information about other students that may be included in the child's education records.

Schools are not required by FERPA to:

- Create or maintain education records;
- Provide parents with calendars, notices, or other information which does not generally contain information directly related to the student;
- Respond to questions about the student.

Amendment of Education Records:

Under FERPA, a school must:

- Consider a request from a parent to amend inaccurate or misleading information in the child's education records;
- Offer the parent a hearing on the matter if it decides not to amend the records in accordance with the request;
- Offer the parent a right to place a statement to be kept and disclosed with the record if as a result of the hearing the school still decides not to amend the record.

A school is not required to consider requests for amendment under FERPA that:

- Seek to change a grade or disciplinary decision;
- Seek to change the opinions or reflections of a school official or other person reflected in an education record;
- Seek to change a determination with respect to a child's status under special education programs.

Disclosure of Education Records:

A school must:

- Have a parent's consent prior to the disclosure of education records;
- Ensure that the consent is signed and dated and states the purpose of the disclosure.

A school MAY disclose education records without consent when:

- The disclosure is to school officials who have been determined to have legitimate educational interests as set forth in the school district's annual notification of rights to parents;
- The student is seeking or intending to enroll in another school;
- The disclosure is to state or local educational authorities auditing or evaluating Federal or State supported education programs or enforcing Federal laws which relate to those programs; ● The disclosure is pursuant to a lawfully issued court order or subpoena; and
- The information disclosed has been appropriately designated as directory information by the school.

Annual Notification:

A school must annually notify parents of students in attendance that they must allow parents to:

- Inspect and review their children's education records;
- Seek amendment of inaccurate or misleading information in their children's education records;
- Consent to most disclosures of personally identifiable information from education records. The annual notice must also include:
    - Information for a parent to file a complaint of an alleged violation with the FPCO;
    - A description of who is considered to be a school official and what is considered to be a legitimate educational interest so that information may be shared with that person;
    - Information about who to contact to seek access or amendment of education records. Means of notification:
- Can include local or student newspaper; calendar; student programs guide; rules handbook, or other means reasonable likely to inform parents;
- Notification does not have to be made individually to parents.

Complaints of Alleged Violations:

Complaints of alleged violations may be addressed to:
Family Policy Compliance Office
US Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5901
Phone: (202) 260-3887

Complaints must:

- Be timely submitted, not later than 180 days from the date you learned of the circumstances of the alleged violation
- Contain specific allegations of fact giving reasonable cause to believe that a violation has occurred, including:
    - o Relevant dates, such as the date of a request or a disclosure and the date the parent learned of the alleged violation;
    - o Names and titles of those school officials and other third parties involved;
    - o A specific description of the education record around which the alleged violation occurred; o A description of any contact with school officials regarding the matter, including dates and estimated times of telephone calls and/or copies of any correspondence exchanged between the parent and the school regarding the matter;
    - o The name and address of the school, school district, and superintendent of the district;
    - o Any additional evidence that would be helpful in the consideration of the complaint.

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    - The name and address of the school, school district, and superintendent of the district;
    - Any additional evidence that would be helpful in the consideration of the complaint.

VALLEY VIRTUAL

REMOTE LEARNING ACADEMY

Every Student Succeeds Act (Public Law 114-95)
Section 1112 (e)(1)(A)

Dear Parent/Guardian:

You have the right to know about the teaching qualifications of your child's classroom teacher in a school receiving Title I funds. The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires that any school district receiving Title I funds must notify parents of each student attending any school receiving Title I funds that they may request, and the district will provide the parents on request (and in a timely manner), information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teachers, including at a minimum, the following:

I. Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;

II. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived; and

III. Whether the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher;

IV. Whether your child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

You may ask for the information by returning this letter to the address listed above. Be sure to give the following information with your request:

Child's full name _____
Parent/guardian full name _____
Address _____
City, state, ZIP _____
Teacher's name _____

Sincerely,

Mrs. Susan Forsythe
Principal

VALLEY VIRTUAL

REMOTE LEARNING ACADEMY

To: Legal Guardian/Student

From: ADMINISTRATION

Re: ACCEPTANCE OF STUDENT HANDBOOK

By signing this memo the Legal Guardian/Student verifies that they have received and had an opportunity to obtain clarification of any policies that are contained in the student handbook.

My signature attests that I have read the student handbook and I agree to abide by it.

_____ _____

Signature of Legal Guardian **Date**

_____

Printed Name

_____ _____

Signature of Student **Date**

_____

Printed Name