

Trousdale County Schools Virtual Learning



Student Handbook 2020-2021

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For the 2020-21 school year, Trousdale County families will have the option to participate in virtual learning through their designated school. All students shall maintain sufficient academic progress. This handbook is provided to outline the procedures and expectations for families who choose to enroll their student in Virtual School. For the purpose of this document, virtual school is defined as distance or remote learning that is done using the internet and electronic instruction.

Becoming a Student

Application

Trousdale County Schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, color, religion, national origin, age, or disability in provision of educational opportunities or employment opportunities and benefits pursuant to the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as codified in 42 USC 2000D, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Pub. L. 92-318, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Title II Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Pub. L.101-336, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975.

Parents/guardian may access the virtual school application [here](#). Applications will be taken prior to the beginning of each semester. The fall 2020 application deadline is July 17, 2020. The Spring 2021 deadline is November 17, 2020. Fall semester students will automatically be enrolled in the spring semester unless officially withdrawn by the parent/guardian.

Parents/guardians must ensure that the student's learning space has access to technology such as a computer, printer, and access to the Internet.

Academics and Academic Integrity

Academics

Grades K-12 Virtual School weekly instruction and assignments will be provided by teachers for students utilizing Google Classroom. In order to fully cover the required curriculum, students should expect to spend up to 7 hours per day engaged in online learning, as required by the State of Tennessee. Kindergarten students will be expected to spend 4.5 hours engaged in online learning.

Please understand that *homeschooling* and *virtual learning* are not the same. To be clear, virtual school is offered by Trousdale County Schools and homeschool students must withdraw from Trousdale County Schools. The Virtual School option is a continuation of Trousdale County Schools curriculum. When virtual learners return to the classroom, the expectation is for a seamless transition into the regular classroom.

Attendance Requirements and Verification

Trousdale County's Attendance Policy

A copy of Trousdale County's attendance policy can be found and reviewed [here](#). Board policies are updated as needed.

Attendance Verification

Under the terms of Trousdale County Virtual School, students are expected to engage in both digital in person and digital instruction at times assigned by the student's teacher. Digital instruction may include independent work, teacher-assigned individual or group projects, audio- or video-recorded lessons, or online class modules, or other appropriate methods as determined by the school and/or teacher.

Daily Attendance Based on Meaningful Student Engagement and Interaction

Tennessee Board of Education Rule 0520-01-17-.01 requires student attendance to be recorded daily when students are participating in remote instruction. Trousdale County Schools will consider students who are interacting and responding to remote instruction as "in attendance." This may include, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- Participation in a live virtual learning session (Google Meet).
- Submission of a student work product via Google Classroom (grades 3-12).
- Submission of a student work product via hard copy or photograph of the student work product (grades K-5).
- Email confirmation from the student or parent.
- Phone exchange between the teacher and the student or parent.

Teachers will be responsible for monitoring student participation in the Virtual School and reporting daily attendance to principals. Student's not completing assignments and submitting them when due will be considered to have an unexcused absence and may be reassigned to the school district's regular instructional program.

Excused and Unexcused Absences

Trousdale County School Board Policy 6.200 defines excused and unexcused absences. These definitions will also apply during Virtual School. In order to receive excusal for an absence from Virtual School, the parent/guardian or student is responsible for submitting the appropriate documentation for those categories defined in Policy 6.200, which includes:

- Personal illness/injury
- Illness of immediate family member;
- Death in the family;

- Extreme weather conditions;
- Religious observances;
- College visits;
- Pregnancy;
- School-sponsored or school endorsed activities; or
- Summons, subpoena, or court orders.

All other absences will be considered unexcused, including absences experienced as a result of student discipline (i.e., out of school suspension). Additionally, absences not properly documented will also be considered unexcused.

Unexcused Absences and Truancy

Trousdale County Schools will utilize the Progressive Truancy Intervention Plan. Due to Virtual School, we will add an additional step to identify students that may have issues preventing them from learning and accumulating unexcused absences. We will start by having the school contact the parents via email, phone, or in person after three unexcused absences. The goal of this meeting/contact shall be to identify and eliminate problems keeping the student from attending school. After the initial meeting, Trousdale County Schools will implement a Three-Tier System to improve student/school attendance.

Tier I

1. An attendance hearing that shall be held with the student and the student's parent or guardian.
2. An attendance contract that shall be developed and signed by the student, the student's parent or guardian, school principal, and the attendance supervisor. The contract shall include all of the following:
 - a. Specific description of the school's attendance expectations for the student;
 - b. The period for which the contract is effective.
 - c. Penalties for additional absences and alleged school offences, including additional disciplinary action and potential referral to juvenile court, and
 - d. Regularly scheduled follow-up meetings to discuss the student's progress.

Tier II

Tier II interventions must be implemented upon a student's accumulation of additional unexcused absences in violation of the attendance contract required under Tier I.

1. An individual assessment by the school guidance counselor, school nurse, or principal of the school into the reasons the student continues to be absent from school.
2. The student maybe referred to counseling, school-based services, or other in-school or out-of-school services aimed at addressing the student's attendance problems.
3. The intervention shall include a reconvening of the student's attendance hearing.

Tier III

Tier III interventions shall be implemented when Tier II truancy interventions are unsuccessful.

1. The intervention shall include a reconvening of the student's attendance hearing.
2. Tier III interventions shall consist of one (1) or more of the following to improve attendance and behavior:
 - a. School-based community service;
 - b. After school course work to make-up assignments in order to improve grades;
 - c. After school course work to make-up assignments in order to improve grades.
 - d. Course work on designated professional development days to make-up assignments in order to improve grades.
 - e. Such referrals may include participation by the student's parent or guardian.

Consequences for Truancy

Considerable absences can directly influence student achievement and the student's ability to understand and comprehend content. Because of the interactive nature of courses within Virtual School, instruction is often dependent upon collaboration with peers and instructors as coursework is completed. As attendance directly relates to success within programs, Trousdale County will follow School Board Policy related to absences resulting in truancy.

Make-Up Work Following Student Absences

Students shall be allowed to make-up all tests, coursework and assignments for days which students submit an excused absence to the teacher. The make-up work must be completed within a reasonable time period as determined by the principal.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is one of the foundations of Virtual Learning. It is the *student's responsibility* to understand and acknowledge the policy statements and cheating definitions of each of his or her instructors.

Plagiarism -The Harbrace Handbook, 18th edition defines plagiarism as “the presentation of someone else’s ideas as your own” (510). Students should strive to avoid this by ensuring that any material which is not common knowledge is adequately cited.

- Some examples of plagiarism are, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Copying and pasting any selection from an online or print source and representing it as your own work.
 - Utilizing selections of online or print sources and failing to properly cite authorship.
 - Presenting the work of another individual as one’s own.

Cheating-The Oxford Dictionary defines the act of cheating as a student’s decision to “act dishonestly or unfairly in order to gain an advantage.” For the purposes of Virtual Learning, three definitions are particularly relevant:

- To influence or lead by deceit, trick, or artifice.
- To practice fraud or trickery.
- To violate rules dishonestly, ex. To cheat on a quiz or assignment
- Some examples are, but are not limited to the following:
 - Providing questions/answers/work to another student.
 - Receiving questions/answers/work from another student.
 - Utilizing online or print sources on an assignment, quiz, or test.

Campus Events and Attendance

Attendance on Campus

Students may participate in sports and any after-school extracurricular activities as long as the student is in good standing. During all meetings or events that students attend on campus, all School Board Policies will be in effect and students are expected to follow the policies.

Course Progress and Academic Support

It is the sole responsibility of the student to complete the work for his or her courses. All teachers will make themselves available to help and/or tutor students as needed over the course of the academic term. It is the student's responsibility to reach out and request support or inform the course instructor that he or she will be needing extra support/tutoring.

Virtual teachers will make several individual contacts with students and parents during the academic term, but ultimately the student must take the initiative to complete the course and stay on track for completion.

Virtual School students are expected to engage in face to face digital interaction (via Google Meet) with the teacher on a regular basis. Failure to engage in face to face digital (synchronous) learning may result in the student being dismissed from Virtual School and reassigned to the school district's regular instructional program.

In the event that a student is not making sufficient academic progress or is not on track to complete the course, or his or her attendance or behavior fails to progress with the expectations of Trousdale County Virtual School, he or she may be dismissed from Virtual School and be reassigned to the school district's regular instructional program.

Grade Monitoring and Report Cards

Student progress is updated weekly in PowerSchool and reflects student progress and achievement as grades are updated. This report contains academic progress and attendance information in each class, and parents are encouraged to closely monitor their student's work in each course. Additionally, students have daily access to assignments through Google Classroom, and parents can sign up for notifications for Google Classroom by contacting a course instructor.

For PowerSchool login information, please contact the main office at each school.

Technology Device, Electronic Media Consent and Internet Agreement

Technology Device

Technology devices will be the responsibility of families with students opting for Virtual School. Our teachers have been trained in using technology devices and are looking forward to the opportunity to integrate technology into their curriculum through digital resources, collaboration and G-Suite including Google Classroom and Google Meet. For more information regarding technology or any other questions, please contact the school's assistant principal.

Responsible Internet Use Policy

The use of the Internet must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of the school system. Use of other organizations' networks or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for that network.

Transmission of any material in violation of any US or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material that is protected by a trade secret. Use for commercial activities is not acceptable. Use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited.

- **Privileges:** The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. The school system administrators will deem what is inappropriate use, and their decision is final. Also, the system administrators may suspend privileges at any time.
- **Acceptable Use:** Students are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Avoid offensive or inflammatory speech.
 - Be courteous and polite.
 - Use appropriate language.
 - Profanity or obscenities are not permitted at any time.
 - Do not use the network in such a way that would disrupt the work of others.
 - All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property.
 - Users may not quote personal communications without the author's consent.
- **Vandalism:** Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, the Internet, or other networks that are connected to the Internet backbone. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.
- **Exception to terms and conditions:** These terms and conditions reflect the entire agreement of the parties and supersedes all prior oral and written agreements and understandings of the parties.

With expanded access to electronic information, availability of inappropriate material is not uncommon. Some sites contain illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or offensive information. Although it is impossible to control such misuses, we believe that with responsible use, the benefits of the internet as an educational tool outweigh the negatives. We especially appreciate partnering with parents to teach responsible Internet use.

Testing

Accommodations

Students who have an active IEP or 504 will receive accommodations as stated in their most recent IEP/504 plan.

TCAP Testing (Grades 3-8 & EOC)

State testing is required for all subjects in grades 3-8 and the following high school subjects: English I, II, & III, Integrated Math I, II, & III, Biology and US History. For the purposes of state testing, the testing schedule will be set and delivered to parents two weeks prior to the first day of testing. All state testing will be completed at each student's designated school. Students are not allowed to miss scheduled tests or to re-schedule tests unless a significant documented emergency occurs.

Removal or Dismissal from Program

Removal from Virtual School

If a student is removed from Virtual School for any number of reasons (failure to participate, lack of acceptable progress, attendance, plagiarism, behavior, etc.), parents will be notified in writing of the removal. If the student does not enroll with the school district or register as a homeschooled student within 5 days of such notification, then the student could be considered truant and referred to court.

Voluntary Withdrawal from Virtual School

Parents/guardians may request to withdraw and return to the district's regular instructional program at any time. All requests for withdrawing from Virtual School shall be made in writing to the Principal and will be given consideration on a case by case basis.

Please submit any questions related to the virtual school choice option to Trousdale County Board of Education, (615) 374-2193.