



Virtual Academy Handbook for Students

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Introduction

The Virtual Academy is a program of the St. Tammany Parish Public School System. The Virtual Academy offers rigorous online courses to St. Tammany Parish Public School's high school students. The Virtual Academy Handbook is intended to help students, parents, guardians, and school officials work together to ensure students are successful in the virtual school.

Mission

The St. Tammany Parish Public School System Virtual Academy is committed to creating a student-centered virtual environment that offers immediate accessibility to learning and empowers students to learn anytime, anywhere.

Course Enrollment

Students currently enrolled in St. Tammany Parish Public Schools may schedule a meeting with their high school counselor to determine eligibility.

Participating in the St. Tammany Virtual Academy means:

- The student is simultaneously enrolled both in St. Tammany Parish Virtual Academy and your St. Tammany Parish public high school in accordance to your geographic attendance zones.
- Students may not enroll in more than 2 online courses per 9-week period in addition to regular school day schedule.
- Only seniors may enroll in the 9-week block courses.
- Should a student fail an online course, the same course may not be repeated the next offering.
- Students/parents understand the financial obligation for enrolling in a virtual course.

Athletics

The Virtual Academy does not guarantee course eligibility for LHSAA and/or NCAA.

Student and Home Partnership Roles and Responsibilities

Participating in the St. Tammany Parish Virtual Academy means:

- Students must work in each of their online courses for a minimum of 4 hours per week, per course. Because block courses are condensed, these courses require a minimum of 8 hours per week, per course.
- Students/parents are responsible for a computer with Internet access at home. Tablets are not compatible with the Virtual Academy course platforms.
- Students must utilize and are expected to log into their school provided email daily to check communication from the online course teacher. This email account should only be used for school purposes and is filtered for inappropriate use.
- Students work independently and are responsible for completing all assignments and tasks in all online courses. Students are expected to complete all unit assignments prior to testing on the unit.
- Weekly unit tests are given on Friday, unless otherwise noted.
- Parents and students should follow all deadline dates set by the teacher of each course.

- Students arrange to complete all proctored assignments, tests, and exams with their facilitator. Failure to arrange your testing by the unit deadline will result in a grade of zero.
- Late Assignments received after Friday at 3:00 p.m. will be graded as a zero.
- If a student is absent for the test or does not complete unit work during the assigned week, attendance policies will be enforced.
- The Virtual Academy offers two make up opportunities for missed assignments/work and tests, that were not attempted previously, per 9 weeks. If a student chooses to participate in the makeup opportunity, the late assignments/tests will be scored at a 75% reduced credit for the first make up opportunity and 50% reduced credit for the second make up opportunity. If a the student fails to participate in the makeup opportunities provided by the Virtual Academy, no other opportunities for makeups will be granted, and all missed assignments/tests will receive a grade of zero.
- Parents should monitor the progress of their student through the grade book in their JPAMS account.

Standards of Online Participation

Each student enrolled in the Virtual Academy is solely responsible for the content posted through his/her login and account activity. Sharing or using your username and password with others or using other's usernames and passwords is strictly prohibited and against St. Tammany Parish Public Schools Procedure and Policy.

The following are strictly prohibited:

- posting personally identifiable information in any format other than an email message;
- antagonism or prejudice of any kind with respect to race, religion, gender, intelligence, age, orientation, disability, or socioeconomic status;
- posting material including language, photographs and videos that are inappropriate;
- any criminal or other illegal activity including encouraging the unlawful use, illegally posting, distributing, uploading, or downloading copyrighted work (whether music, video, words, images, drawings, pictures, software or otherwise);
- sharing assignments, quizzes, tests, assessments, essays, term papers, questions/answers, or any other action that would violate any code of conduct, expectations or rules in regards to academic honesty;
- spam or unauthorized, unsolicited, commercial promotion; and disruptions of the server or host software.

Failure to comply with these strictly prohibited standards of participation will result in temporary or permanent removal of user access to the Virtual Academy and result in disciplinary consequences based on the severity of the infraction.

Dress Code

When students report to a Virtual Academy facility, they must adhere to St. Tammany Parish Public Schools' dress code listed in the St. Tammany Parish Public Schools Student Handbook.

Attendance Policy

The Virtual Academy is designed and intended to be a virtual learning environment. Instruction is computer-based. Therefore, students can work anywhere there is an internet connection. The Virtual Academy requires that students work on their online courses daily. Although flexibility in choosing the time of day for instruction is a huge advantage with virtual school, students must maintain adequate progress in all courses. Student progress will be monitored closely by their assigned facilitators and teachers.

All virtual students must meet attendance conditions. Students who are consistently not on pace and/or in violation of the recommended time on courses may have their online course placement reevaluated. The Virtual Academy will track attendance and course progress weekly.

- Students must spend a minimum of 4 hours per course, per week for semester courses and 8 hours per course, per week for block courses and/or be on pace in all classes.
- Students must complete all work in each subject area weekly, unless permission has been granted by the Virtual Academy Coordinator.

If the student presents a doctor's note for the absentee day(s) missed, the absence will be excused and the student will be allowed to make up the assignments and tests for full credit.

If an absence is unexcused, all missed assignments and tests will receive a grade of zero. Students will be allowed to recapture partial credit for their work during one of the makeup weekend opportunities provided. If a the student fails to participate in the makeup opportunities provided by the Virtual Academy, no other opportunities for makeups will be granted, and all missed assignments/tests will receive a grade of zero.

Note: If a student is unable work in his/her course(s), it is the parents' responsibility to notify the Virtual Academy Coordinator or facilitator either by phone or email. Inactivity can be approved provided that student progress is satisfactory in all courses or when prior notice is given to the Virtual Academy Coordinator. Extended periods of inactivity, coupled with unsatisfactory student progress, may be grounds to re-evaluate the student's online placement.

Orientation

Students must attend an initial orientation session with his/her assigned facilitator at their school site.

General Concerns & Technical Issues

In order to get the fastest service possible, students should report any coursework or grade related issue to their online teacher and/facilitator.

If you experience issues with the Learning Management Platform where your coursework is housed, please contact the Coordinator of the Virtual Academy.

St. Tammany Parish Schools and/or the Virtual Academy does not provide devices, internet service or transportation. STPSB is also not responsible for equipment that is not property of STPSB.

Course Completion

Course completion deadline for students in grades 9-12 are consistent with the district calendar for 18-week courses; except for the graduating seniors in the final semester. Nine-week block courses align to the nine-week grading period.

Extensions will not be granted for semester and/or block courses.

Integrity in Scored Assignments and Assessments

We encourage support from family, friends, staff; however, when an assignment is scored, the work must be the student's authentic work. Scored assignments and assessments are a reflection of student knowledge.

All scored assignments and assessments must be the student's original work, whether completed at home or in our lab. If a student is at a STPSB facility or other site to take a supervised unit test and/or exam they will follow the Virtual Academy testing protocols.

When completing all assignments and assessments each student is expected to:

- complete assignments and/or assessments independently;
- refrain from copying or redistributing any part of the assignments and/or assessments in any way
 - electronically, verbally, or on paper;
- take assessments without any aides –textbooks, references, or other materials (printed or electronic) – unless otherwise instructed to do so;
- use only personal notes to takes quizzes (no screen shots or previous quizzes are allowed to be used);
- do not log in to a second course or open course related materials on another browser on another computer;
- do not confer with others (students, family members, teachers, facilitators or acquaintances) either in person or through electronic communication, during assessments.

Academic fraud will result in a zero on the test or assignment for the first offense, and contact will be made to the school based facilitator and Virtual Academy Coordinator. On the second offense, a zero will be assigned to the test or assignment, and the base school administration will be notified. School level discipline may be implemented. Should academic fraud occur a third time, the student will receive school level discipline, and removal from the course will be discussed.

Notification of Grades and Student Progress

Students are able to view course progress and percent completion of courses at all times using the online course dashboard. To view weekly grades for a course, parents and students should log into

JPAMS. JPAMS is the official gradebook for all online classes. Online teachers post grades once a week in JPAMS so that students and parents can stay current with the student's progress.

Note: It is very important that homebound students work diligently to make up missed assignments and tests, as quickly as possible and plan accordingly when illnesses are factored with course deadlines. Students should take advantage of periods of time when they are able to work to catch up. All grades/scores earned in the homebound program are reported back to the base school as a transfer grade when the student returns to their school.

Grading Policy

- Online courses will follow school board policy for grading- 80% (course assignments) and 20% (exam).
- Semester exams are not required for LEAP/EOC courses should the student have an LEAP/EOC score on file. If a student decides to take the exam in lieu of using a previous LEAP/ EOC score to raise the course average, the exam will count as 20%. Should the student's exam grade not raise the final average, we may exempt that attempt.
- Grades are posted weekly in JPAMS by teachers.
- Scores in any course platform are NOT official grades. Official grades are found in JPAMS.
- Final grades will be determined based on the 100-point scoring. Grading will follow the St. Tammany Parish Grading Scale and Policies:

A = 100 – 93

B = 92 - 85

C = 84 - 75

D = 74 - 67

F= 66 - 0

Student Records

Student records will be maintained by the lab facilitator or Online Learning Coordinator. Final grades will be reported to the student's base school.

Policy Reservation

The Virtual Academy reserves the right to change or modify any policies at any time. Changes in policy will be posted to the Virtual Academy website. It is the student's responsibility to check the website regularly for updates.



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Superintendent

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a³ Virtual Academy

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The undersigned student and undersigned parent/guardian do hereby acknowledge that they agree to adhere to the Virtual Academy Handbook.

Course(s) enrolled: _____

As a student, I read, understand, and will follow the contents of the Virtual Academy Handbook.

Signature of Student _____ Date _____

As a parent/guardian, I have read, understand, and support my student in following the contents of the handbook.

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

Parent Contact phone number _____

Parent Contact email address _____

Annual Public Notification 2016-17

STPPS adheres to the equal opportunity provisions of federal and civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, or disability.

STPPS se adhiere a las disposiciones de igualdad de oportunidades de las leyes federales y los derechos civiles y no discrimina por raza, color, origen nacional, religión, edad, sexo, orientación sexual, estado civil o discapacidad.