



School District of Hartford Jt. #1

# **VIRTUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM POLICY HANDBOOK**

## Virtual Program Handbook

The School District of Hartford Jt. #1 offers students another learning-style through the Virtual Education Program.

This program was created and implemented in the 2011-12 school year. The program was developed to better serve the needs of some of our students and move toward preparing ALL students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills they will be required to demonstrate in their futures.

All students enrolled in the School District of Hartford Jt. #1 Virtual Program will have access to an online curriculum for the course or courses enrolled in and also have a school-issued notebook computer with Wi-Fi connectivity for the Internet.

### **Virtual Program Options**

Resident students in grades K thru eighth grade are allowed to enroll in all of the following options. Non-residents students (Open Enrollment students) may only participate in the School-Based Virtual Program.

#### **Grades 6-8**

- **School-Based Virtual Program (Any resident or Open Enrollment Student may enroll)**
  - In the school-based virtual blended program, the student would come to Central Middle School for the school day.
  - The student could choose from an entirely virtual-based curriculum or a combination of traditional classroom courses and virtual courses.
  - In addition, the student may choose from a variety of elective courses offered traditionally or virtually.
  
- **Home-Based Virtual Blended (Open to resident students only)**
  - In the home-based virtual blended program, the student has the option to complete their coursework at home.
  - The student may also choose to come to Central Middle School to participate in specifically selected courses. Examples could include courses such as art, physical education, band, etc. Parents are responsible for transportation to and from Central Middle School.
  
- **Home-Based Virtual (Open to resident students only)**
  - In the home-based virtual education program, the student completes all coursework at home.
  - This program would require the student to complete all of the appropriate academic courses required for that particular grade level. In addition, the student would choose from a variety of elective courses and complete them virtually at home.
  - The parent acts as the learning coach and is present during student academic engagement.

## Grades K-5

- **Home-Based Virtual (Open to resident students only)**
  - The student completes all coursework at home.
  - The teacher communicates with parents via email, telephone online Web meetings or even face-to-face in many cases.
  - Combinations of traditional textbooks, CD's, videos, and hands-on materials as well as online learning complement the curriculum.
  - A parent or "learning coach" facilitates progress through the daily lessons.
  - Parents can expect to spend 3-5 hours daily supporting their child's education.
  - Students will spend 5-6 hours daily on coursework and homework.

## Description of Online Courses

The online courses offered by Hartford Jt. #1 Virtual Program are web-based which means they are accessible from anywhere there is Internet access.

- Students have access to their courses 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, providing flexibility in scheduling when students work on their assignments.
- Lesson content is provided online and all assignments are submitted electronically.
- Each course has a Wisconsin DPI certified teacher that works directly with the students facilitating their learning and evaluating their efforts.

## List of Available Courses (Grades 6-8)\*

### Full Year Courses

- Language Arts
- Math
- Science
- Social Studies

### Trimester Courses

- Spanish 1 & 2
- French 1 & 2
- German 1 & 2
- Music History
- Physical Education
- Art Appreciation
- Career Explorations (1-5)
- Keyboarding & Computer Applications 1 & 2
- Principals of Coding 1 & 2

*\*The District reserves the right to modify available courses at any time based on enrollment.*

## Profile of a Successful Online Student

The following characteristics are common to students who find success in the online learning environment:

- Computer literate
- Highly motivated
- Independent learner
- Manages time well
- Self-directed
- Assertive
- Self-advocate
- Self-disciplined
- Problem-solver
- Follows detailed directions
- Effective oral and written communication skills
- Takes ownership for their learning

Not all students taking online courses have these skills initially, but with support and guidance they often develop them. The fewer of these characteristics a student possesses, initially the more structure and support they need to be successful.

## Summary of Responsibilities

<b>Student Responsibilities</b>	<b>Parent/Coach/Mentor Responsibilities</b>	<b>Teacher Responsibilities</b>
Log on to the course regularly	Ensure access to necessary technology	Return calls/emails by the end of the next school day
Ask questions if you don't understand	Monitor gradebook & pace chart	Provide progress reports to Parent/Mentor/Coach
Stay on pace (Pace Chart)	Provide support & encouragement	Meet with students face-to-face or online as needed
Communicate regularly with your online teacher	Provide structure & guidance as needed	Monitor pace
Take notes & prepare for tests	Be a liaison between student & teacher as needed	Provide materials & instruction as needed

## Enrollment Requirements

To enroll in the Hartford Jt. #1 Virtual Program the student must be a resident of the Hartford Jt. #1 School District or must file an Open Enrollment Request and be approved. Any open enrollment student must be enrolled in the School-Based Virtual Program. To enroll in this program, contact the Central Middle School Principal or Virtual Program Coordinator.

Registration for the virtual program will take place in the spring for the following year. Special provisions for enrollment at another time such as students new to the district may be made in consultation with the Virtual Program Coordinator and with approval of the Central Middle School Principal. Students may finish coursework early or have the opportunity to complete within a 12-month enrollment period.

## **Flexibility of Completing Coursework**

Students in the virtual program have flexibility in completing the coursework at their own pace. However, students must make weekly progress in order to complete the coursework within the time given. Any student who does not make progress in completing assignments for a virtual course and has not made prior arrangements with his/her instructor will be put on a Progress Plan.

## **Teacher-Student Contact Time**

The District will require face-to-face time with their online participants; individual schedules will be developed and times may vary. All students will be required to take required state assessments. In addition, students may be required to take local district assessments. The District will define how much teacher-student or student-student interaction will be incorporated into a course, including expectations regarding how quickly teachers are expected to respond to phone calls, e-mails, or postings.

## **Computers and Internet Access**

Access to the technology utilized by the Hartford Jt. #1 Virtual Program imposes certain responsibilities and obligations. Appropriate use is ethical, honest, and legal. It demonstrates respect for physical and intellectual property, system security protocols, and individuals' rights to privacy as well as freedom from intimidation, harassment, and unwarranted annoyance. All District technology policies apply in this learning environment. The student is subject to all school rules and regulations by the School Board and the individual school. All students and parents will be required to sign the Acceptable Use Policy and the Laptop Handbook Agreement that governs the student's responsible use of technology. Consequences of any violation of Internet use may include a loss of Internet privileges for the student. In an online program, such a consequence may also mean removal from the course, and the student will be subject to all other disciplinary consequences outlined in the Central Middle School Handbook or District policy.

## **Attendance Policy**

The Hartford Jt. #1 Virtual Program is flexible and allows for learning to take place at night, on weekends, or during the weekday. Attendance is based on the number of hours completed in accordance with District and state policy for a course or grade level.

## **Academic Integrity**

There are two kinds of academic integrity violations: plagiarism and cheating. Students must do their own work. When a questionable assignment is submitted, the teacher may research using an electronic database or question the student. Students who are academically dishonest and plagiarize will have consequences in accordance with District policy.

## **Coordination with Traditional Course or School Activities**

There are times when a virtual program student may want to participate in traditional school curriculum related activities. If an activity is related to the virtual course the student is taking, we will try to accommodate the request provided the student has made sufficient progress in the virtual program and advance notice and approval is given by the school principal.

If an activity is a reward activity or school-wide activity, the virtual program student may qualify for the reward based on established criteria and get advance approval from the school principal.

## **Staffing**

Virtual program staff members are Wisconsin certified teachers who have completed all necessary coursework and hours to be virtual program instructors.

## **Internet Connections**

All students enrolled in the virtual program will be provided a notebook computer with Wi-Fi connectivity. The use of the notebook computer at home will require a wireless Internet connection. Please notify the school principal if you do not have an Internet connection at home.

## **DPI Requirements**

Students enrolled in the virtual program are required to meet all Department of Public Instruction grade appropriate mandates for coursework and attendance.

## **Course Completion Timelines**

Eighth grade students will be considered eligible to take part in the recognition ceremony if they have satisfactorily met all course requirements as compared to the traditional program. Final decisions regarding eligibility will be made by the school principal.

If a student fails to complete all assigned course work, his/her grade for the course will be determined with incomplete work scored as "0" unless there are prior arrangements made with the instructor.

## **Drop Policy**

Since online courses may not be a good fit for all students, there is a four-week drop window beginning on the date of the first day of class, in which students can drop the course without consequences. The student must notify the online teacher of the intent to drop the course and the parent needs to confirm their support for this decision by email or phone call to the Virtual Program Coordinator and/or the Central Middle School Principal.

If a student wishes to drop a course after the four-week window, a conference with the student needs to take place between the online teacher and the student and parent. Because the district incurs costs for each student, there will be a \$75 fee if the student drops the course after the four-week

window. For a foreign language course or any other course that requires a higher cost to the district the fee will be \$155.

The student may also be administratively dropped from the course after the drop date for either of the following reasons:

- Student is not making appropriate progress. (Drop fee will be charged)
- Unacceptable behavior in the on-site virtual program. (Drop fee will be charged)

## **Cost/Fees**

Since the Hartford Jt. #1 Virtual Program is part of a public school there is no additional tuition. However certain fees may apply with enrollment in specific courses.

The District Student/Parent Laptop Agreement packet contains information and updated costs for lost/stolen/severely-damaged hardware, technology fees, optional accessories, and repairs. It also lists information for care of district-issued computing hardware.

A notebook case/bag is required in order to take any district-issued notebook home (bags/cases may need to be inspected/approved by district staff). The District offers and highly recommends a special “always-on” case at a nominal cost. The purchase and use of this special case waives the repair fees for accidental damages to district-issued hardware, as indicated in the Student/Parent laptop agreement packet.

If you have a question about costs & fees, please contact your school principal for more information.