

Manatee County Public Schools Manatee Virtual Program Handbook 2020-21

Mission: Manatee Public Schools will educate and develop all students for their success tomorrow.

Vision: Manatee Public Schools will be an exemplary student-focused school system that develops lifelong learners to be globally competitive.

Students and Parents: Please read this handbook carefully. It is required that you both sign, date and return the last page once completed.

Full Time Virtual Programs offered by the School District of Manatee County

Manatee Virtual Instructional Program (MVIP) includes three Full Time options for students in grades K-12. These programs are:

1. Manatee Virtual School (MVS)
2. Florida Virtual School (FLVS)
3. K12.com K-5 and Edgenuity 6-12.

These Virtual Programs provide:

- Academic rigor aligned to Florida Standards
- High quality instruction to eligible district students using online and distance education technology
- Highly qualified, Florida certified teachers
- Frequent communication with students and parent(s) / guardian
- Additional support when needed

The Manatee Virtual Instructional Program Handbook is based on Florida Statutes 1002.45 and 1002.415 as well as other statutes and will be updated annually to reflect any changes in legislation(s). All students and parents are required to abide by the policies set forth in this handbook as well as the [District's Student Progression Plan](#) and [Code of Conduct](#) manuals.

Attendance and Truancy

All students enrolled in a virtual school instructional program are subject to compulsory attendance requirements of 1003.21 Florida Statutes. Attendance must be verified by the teacher. State law requires the regular attendance of children between the ages of 6 and 16 and makes parents and legal guardians legally responsible for seeing that their children attend school. 5 unexcused absences in one month or 10 unexcused absences in a 90 day period will result in a referral for truancy court action. Once a full time student earns fifteen (15) consecutive absences, he/she will be withdrawn from the virtual program and reported to truancy. All other truancy rules apply per the Code of Conduct manual mentioned above.

The parent should contact the teacher if the student is going to be absent and explain the absence(s). If a student is continually sick and repeatedly absent from school, he or she must be under the supervision of a physician and provide documentation upon request.

If a student is at or above pace for a specific course, the student will not be counted absent for that course.

A student is counted as present for five days of the week if:

- A K-5 student has completed all work/lessons on the planner for the previous week. A week is defined as Sunday through Saturday.
- A 6-12th grade student has signed on and completed at least 5% additional coursework during the previous week. A week is defined as Monday through Sunday.

Absences:

- A K-5 student who does not meet the lesson completion requirement and is not at or above pace will be counted absent according to the chart below. Absences for K-5 are recorded by the day.

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|---------------|------------|
| Lessons Overdue | None | 5 Lessons | 6-10 Lessons | 11-15 Lessons | 16-20 Lessons | 21 or more |
| Number of Absences | 0 Absences | 1 Absence | 2 Absences | 3 Absences | 4 Absences | 5 Absences |

- A 6-12th grade student who does not have 5% additional work completed each week in each course and is not at or above pace will be counted absent according to the chart below. Absences for students in grades 6 through 12 are recorded by the course or subject.

| | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Percent of additional instructional work completed in each course from the previous week | 5% additional work | Between 4 and 5% additional work | Between 3 and 4% additional work | Between 2 and 3% additional work | Between 1 and 2% additional work | Less than 1% additional work |
| Number of Absences | 0 Absences | 1 Absence | 2 Absences | 3 Absences | 4 Absences | 5 Absences |

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity means:

- Student work on each assignment is completely his/her own
- Collaboration with another classmate on any assignment must be pre-approved by the instructor
- A student will not practice plagiarism in any form
- A student will not allow others to copy his/her work
- A student will not misuse content from the Internet

What is Plagiarism? Plagiarism is copying or using ideas or words from another person, an online classmate, or Internet or print sources and presenting them as one's own. MVS follows the same Matrix of consequences for failure to comply with academic integrity and plagiarism issues. The Matrix can be found on page 4 of [this](#) document.

Telephone and Email Guidelines

In a virtual setting the telephone is one of the key pieces of equipment needed to help facilitate the teacher-student communication. Students must have access to a working computer and telephone. It is also helpful for students to have access to a scanner for submitting assignments. Certain courses will require additional software to be downloaded on computers.

Curriculum and Instructional Pacing Guides

All course curriculum is aligned to Florida Standards and focuses on the required Florida State Assessments. Course offerings are aligned to the Florida Course Code Directory and include all core courses and selected electives including Advanced Placement courses.

Course Load

Full time virtual students, **MUST** be enrolled, activated and remain in 6 courses per semester. If a student is removed/ withdrawn from one of their courses due to lack of progress and is not reinstated in the course within 5 days OR does not request another .5 or full credit course within 24 hours, the student will either:

- a) receive a grade of "F" for the semester in the course from which they were initially withdrawn AND / OR
- b) be withdrawn as a full time MVS student and required to register as a Home Schooled student OR
- c) be withdrawn from MVS and reactivated at their zoned school as a full time student.

Summer courses, completed or not, will not be considered as one of the six courses required during the school calendar year for any MVS Full Time student.

Advanced Placement Course

Students who select to take Advanced Placement Courses must provide their own transportation to their zoned brick and mortar school to take the appropriate Advanced Placement Test. All students enrolled in the Advanced Placement Course are required to take the Advanced Placement Test.

English Language Learners

All new students who enter Manatee Public Schools and answer one or more affirmative responses on the home language survey should be given the initial Comprehensive English Language Learning Assessment (CELLA) in order to determine placement in specific courses. The LEP committee will determine if an online course is appropriate for the English Language Learner. Online teachers must meet the same requirements for instructing students identified as English Language Learners as other teachers. Accommodations will be provided and documented to ensure the success of English Language Learners.

Grading Procedures

Teachers are responsible for maintaining and reporting accurate grades. Students will not earn or be issued grades by the quarter. Only semester grades will be issued. Grades are issued by the teacher and entered into the student information system according to the district timeline.

Instructional Materials

The district will ensure receipt of all student materials by Parent/Guardian signature of receipt of all said items that were mailed or physically delivered.

Mandatory Testing

Students enrolled in Manatee Virtual programs are considered public school students and are therefore required to participate in all state mandated testing. For Full Time MVS students, transportation to and from the testing site (zoned school) is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Scheduling of state mandated testing is defined by the State of Florida and the district and cannot be modified. The district will establish the testing window specific dates and times. It is the responsibility of the family to make arrangements to be at the zoned school during these scheduled events.

Multi-Tiered System of Support/Response to Intervention

Teachers are expected to utilize the Multi-Tiered System of Support and the problem solving process to ensure success of all students. The Multi-Tiered System of Support is based on defining the problem, analyzing the data to determine why the problem is occurring, developing and implementing a plan driven by results of the problem analysis and measuring the responsiveness to determine appropriate next steps. The online teacher should provide differentiated support to address the needs of each student.

Pacing Guides

Upon activation of a course, a Pacing Guide will be developed by the teacher, for and with the student, which indicates weekly completion requirements. Regardless of course activation date, students are required to complete the course by the end of the semester per the [District calendar](#).

Parent Conferences

Parent/Guardian will be contacted as soon as a student concern is identified. The conference could be in person or over the phone.

Student Responsibilities

- The goal of every student should be that of an engaged, focused student. The student is expected to dedicate the online time required to complete the course assignments and assessments.
- The student is responsible for completing his/her own work according to each course's pacing guide.
- The student is responsible for contacting the teacher to arrange any verbal or online assessments.
- The student is responsible for contacting the instructor for additional help and support if needed.
- If the student is absent, he/she must complete the make-up assignments as soon as possible.
- The student is responsible for participating in the required state assessments at his/her zoned school.
- Seniors must complete all course work and assessments by the deadline for graduation decisions.
- The student must contact the teacher in a timely manner to schedule the Discussion Based Assessment (DBA).
- DBA's must be passed to earn credit in the course.

Parent / Guardian Responsibilities

Enrollment in the virtual instruction program is a commitment by the student and parent / guardian. Every student, regardless of age and grade level, must be provided with adequate daily supervision and support by a responsible adult or parent/guardian. The parent/ guardian's active participation is essential to ensure the success of the virtual school student. In the virtual environment parents can monitor their student's progress and learning content 24/7 (via the FLVS parent account).

- Parents / Guardians **MUST** create a parent account at the FLVS school website. Directions can be found [here](#).
- All parent contact information including name, email and phone number must be current in the student's and parent's FLVS accounts.
- The parent/guardian must supervise all instruction and monitor the student's pace and confirm all assignments completed.
- The parent/guardian shall be responsible for their child's school attendance as required by law. Absences of more than three (3) days must be reported to the school by the parent/guardian. If the student is absent for any reason, the parent must ensure that the student completes all assignments to ensure pacing guide compliance. Please review the Attendance Policies in the virtual environment.

- The parent/guardian will establish the structure necessary for focused participation in classes; will provide motivation and time management; and will regularly communicate with school staff.

Physical Education Waivers

Physical Education requirements for Full Time virtual students follow the same guidelines as zoned schooled students as described in the [Student Progression Plan](#) (Page 32)

Physical Education requirements may be waived for K-8 students who meet one of the following criteria:

- The student is enrolled or required to enroll in a remedial course.
- The student's parent indicates in writing to the school that:
 - a) The parent requests that the student enroll in another course from among those courses offered as options by the school or
 - b) The student is participating in physical activities outside the school day which are equal to or in excess of the mandated requirement.

Promotion/Graduation

Manatee's virtual programs are public schools and therefore full-time students will be held to the promotion and graduation requirements as indicated in the district's [Student Progression Plan](#).

Expectations of Online Instructor:

- Complete welcome call
- Monitor Attendance
- Maintain monthly contact with students and parents
- Weekly contact for students behind pace
- Grade assignments within 48 hours during normal work week
- Return calls, emails, texts within 24 hours during normal work week

School Day / School Calendar

Although students are working in an online environment usually from home, the overall time spent engaged in school activities is similar to that in a traditional school environment. Elementary students should expect to spend approximately five hours per day, five days per week. Secondary students should spend between 6 and 7 hours per day, five days per week on their work. The parent / guardian should determine the actual hours each day. The established schedule must provide adequate time to complete all coursework to remain on pace, accommodate synchronous activities and provide adequate time to work with teachers during their posted office hours.

All virtual programs follow the traditional school calendar. Students and teachers will follow the same semester start/end dates and holidays. Therefore, all six courses must be completed by the designated semester end dates for that school year.

Student Code of Conduct/Acceptable Use Policy

Internet access is required for students who take courses with Manatee Virtual Programs. Internet access offers valuable, diverse and unique resources to both students and teachers. Access must be used in a responsible, safe, efficient, ethical, and legal manner.

- Students are responsible for good behavior on the computer network. Do not use obscene, profane, threatening or disrespectful language.
- Think about the social consequences of any publicly accessible online community forum or other program you interact with. Email is not private.
- Any sending of unsolicited email to your online classmates is prohibited. Email with your online classmates should be of a course-related nature only.
- Students must use an email address that is appropriate for an educational environment.
- Protect your password.
- MVIP assumes no responsibility for any phone charges, line costs or usage fees for connectivity to the internet.
- Students are required to adhere to the District Student Code of Conduct.

Student Contact and Drop Policy

Only through continuous communication can students be successful in an online course. Within each course the instructor outlines the weekly minimum work requirements (Pace Chart). It is essential that the student and instructor maintain regular contact. To ensure that our students are aware of this commitment, this process will be followed:

- If the student does not submit the expected number of assignments within a period of seven (7) consecutive days or is behind in pacing for the course, the student and parent(s) will receive a contact from the instructor. The communication will require the student to contact the instructor to discuss plans for getting back on pace. If the student does not respond, the teacher will contact the parent.
- If the student does not respond to the contact by submitting assignments within seven (7) days or does not continue to submit an acceptable number of assignments each week, the instructor will communicate to the student and parent(s) to remind them of the importance of submitting work and detailing the withdrawal process.
- If a student does not respond by submitting assignments within fourteen (14) days of the initial phone call, the district will assume that the student does not intend to remain in the course and the student may be administratively dropped from the course.
- An official final grade report will be emailed to the student and his/her school upon completion of the course and the return of any course materials will be expected.

Students with Disabilities/Exceptional Student Education (ESE)/Section 504

Prior to enrollment as a full-time student, an Individual Education Plan/504 accommodation plan will be reviewed to determine if the virtual environment is appropriate for the individual student. Not all ESE services are available in every virtual program. The IEP team will determine the location of services, should they be required for the student.

The IEP Team may determine the need for additional services beyond those provided in the virtual instruction program. Depending on the nature and extent of those additional services, students may be able to participate in one of the district programs.

Withdraw Procedures

Full-time enrollment in a virtual instruction program is expected to be a commitment for one school year.

The student will acknowledge and sign an online commitment:

"I acknowledge that during the first 28 days of being activated into an online course, I may drop the course without penalty. I understand that for each online course there are a minimum number of assignments that must be completed each week. Failure to submit the minimum number of assignments on a weekly basis will result in my removal from the course and will result in a failing grade being assigned to my academic transcript. If I drop the course after completing 50% of the class requirements or fail to take the final exam, my grade for the course will be an F."

Students withdrawing from any full time virtual instruction program will be required to return to their zoned school OR register as a home school student.

Manatee Virtual Instruction Program Handbook
2020-21 Signature Page

I have read, understood and agree to the conditions set forth in the Manatee Virtual Program Handbook.

Parent Name Print: _____

Parent Name Signature: _____

Student Name Print: _____

Student Name Signature: _____

Date: _____

Return Signature Page Only To:
School District of Manatee County
Att: Monica Quinn
Email: quinn2m@manateeschools.net
Fax: 941-209-6883