

Virtual Education: An Introduction

In 2018, the Missouri Legislature created new requirements for local school districts related to access to virtual education courses. The Maplewood Richmond Heights school district has developed a system to comply with these new laws. The law states that any student in kindergarten through 12th grade enrolled in the MRH School District who was also enrolled as a full-time student the previous semester can opt to take a course virtually through a district-approved provider or through the Missouri Course Access Program (MOCAP) organized through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The links at the bottom of this web page will provide more information.

Legal Notice

Because virtual instruction can be an effective education option for some students, the district may offer virtual courses to students through district staff or by contracting for those services as part of the district-sponsored curriculum. In addition, eligible students may enroll in virtual courses offered through the Missouri Course Access Program (MOCAP). The district will accept all grades and credits earned through district-sponsored virtual instruction and MOCAP.

The district will pay the costs of a virtual course only if the district has first approved the student's enrollment in the course as described in this policy. Even if a student or his or her parents/guardians pay the costs for a virtual course, the student or parents/guardians should meet with the principal or designee prior to enrollment to ensure that the course is consistent with the student's academic and personal goals.

The district is not required to provide students access to or pay for courses beyond the equivalent of full-time enrollment. The district will provide supervision for students who take virtual courses in district facilities but will not provide supervision for students taking virtual courses offsite. Students taking courses virtually are subject to district policies, procedures and rules applicable to students enrolled in traditional courses including, but not limited to, the district's discipline code and prohibitions on academic dishonesty, discrimination, harassment, bullying and cyberbullying.

Student Skills Necessary for Success in Virtual Courses

- Student has demonstrated time-management skills that indicate the student is capable of submitting assignments and completing course requirements without reminders.
- Student has demonstrated persistence in overcoming obstacles and willingness to seek assistance when needed.
- Student has demonstrated verbal or written communication skills that would allow the student to succeed in an environment where the instructor may not provide nonverbal cues to support the student's understanding.
- Student has the necessary computer or technical skills to succeed in a virtual course.
- Student has access to technology resources to participate in a virtual course.
- Student has had previous success in virtual coursework.