Maximizing Educational Opportunities

Prepared by: Dr. Thomas J. Brennan, Jr.

With the ever expanding demands on public education and need to develop new educational pathways for our students and staff, the Manchester School District has positioned itself to move beyond the classroom and the schoolhouse. The District has provided the policies necessary for its students to advance at their own rate, in any location, and at any time.

11/13/2012

Overview

In response to the initiatives identified by the Mayor, I have developed the following strategies to meet the educational needs of our students and staff. The Manchester School District's Board of School Committee has provided the policies to maximize learning opportunities both in and out of the schoolhouse. These policies coupled with emerging technology and the desire of higher education and business to play a greater role in public K-12 education has placed our District in an advantageous position.

We are able to expand the learning environment beyond the classroom and school to include online learning (VLACS, colleges, and universities), extended learning opportunities (ELO) and other venues for student learning.

We have and will continue to forge partnerships with colleges, universities, and businesses to expand learning opportunities for students and staff.

In that spirit, the following steps will be taken over the next weeks and months:

- Implementation of a Principals' Academy
  - Current Assistant Principals and staff will be given the opportunity to work with a cohort of aspiring administrators within the Manchester School District beginning in the summer of 2013. This project will be developed in collaboration with Southern New Hampshire University, SERESC and ERC.
  - An outline of the Principals' Academy mission and goals will be completed no later than January 15, 2013, as well as the Academy's course content and timeline.
- Expansion of our participation with the Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS)
  - 522 students Manchester students (including 36 home schoolers) are currently enrolled in VLACS
    - High School 461
      - Central 166
      - Memorial 156
      - West 139
    - Middle School 23
      - Hillside 12
      - McLaughlin 5
      - Parkside 1
      - Southside 5
    - Elementary School 2
      - McDonough 1
      - Parker-Varney 1

- Participation in the development of a Blended Learning Lab in each of our high schools to offer courses that combine face-to-face instruction with online learning opportunities.
    - Start Date: Second Semester (January 22, 2013)
    - Each high school will have a Blended Learning Lab located within the building to assist students enrolled in VLACS.
    - Locations to be determined.
    - Projected Cost:
        - $30,000 ($10,000 per lab for hardware).
            - Will seek corporate and/or non-profit funding.
        - $43,500 (3 Lab Facilitators at $14,500 each).
            - $25 per hour X 29 hours per week X 20 weeks.
                - General Fund Expenditure
    - Blended Learning Lab Handbook (Appendix A).
- Creation of an intra-district learning environment for undersubscribed courses
    - Start Date: Second Semester (January 22, 2013)
    - Each high school will have a remote classroom.
    - Locations to be determined.
    - Projected Cost: $3,687.00 ($1,229 per classroom).
    - December 5, 2012
        - Identify undersubscribed courses.
        - Identify locations within our high schools to serve as remote learning classrooms.
        - Assign teaching staff.
        - Provide support and supervision at remote sites.
        - Identify students who would benefit from this educational opportunity.
        - Modify student schedules (if necessary).
        - Review program with the Manchester Education Association Leadership.
    - December 10, 2012
        - Share final implementation plan with the BOSC.
    - Report from Jeff DeLangie, Director of Technical Resource Center (Appendix B).

- Expansion of partnership with University New Hampshire- Manchester
  - Start Date: January 22, 2013.
  - Provide university level courses for students (High School/University Credit).
    - Introduction to Business
    - Business
    - Introduction to Computer Programming
    - Introduction to Internet and Web Authoring
  - Course time to be determine (options being considered)
    - During school if schedule allows.
    - After school prior to evening classes (6:30 PM).
    - Saturday
  - Cost: To Be Finalized
    - District: $3,500 to $4,000 per course
    - Student: $0-$150 per course
- Redistricting
  - I am not prepared to present a final plan tonight because of the following unanswered questions:
    - Location of Preschool.
    - Impact of Hooksett/Candia decisions in regard to High School.
    - Building administration's input prior to finalizing the plan.
    - Impact on existing programs in our elementary schools when the "islands" are eliminated.
    - Unable to verify data in regard to enrollment (actual and projected).

APPENDIX A

BLENDED LEARNING LAB HANDBOOK

"Blended learning is any time a student learns at least in part at a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home and at least in part through online delivery with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace".

Michael B. Horn
INNOSIGHT Institute

Welcome

Dear New Hampshire District Schools,

It is my pleasure to introduce you to Blended Learning Labs (BLLs), where education is all about choice. BLLs are the product of a partnership between Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS) and individual New Hampshire districts that provide opportunities to engage students in an exciting new learning environment.

This handbook is a comprehensive, step-by-step guide that provides information to help districts partner with VLACS to create a BLL. It is our goal at VLACS to help students in every New Hampshire district succeed! BLLs create an environment that allows students to reach beyond the walls of their classrooms and connect with teachers and students throughout New Hampshire and beyond.

BLLs can offer innovative learning solutions to districts such as: increasing student course options, offering the flexibility to fix scheduling conflicts, presenting the opportunity for a student to make up a credit while staying on pace to graduate, and allowing students to earn college credit through SNHU (UStart) and CCSNH (e-Start).

Here's how they work. Schools provide a computer lab and facilitator. VLACS provides the curriculum and a certified instructor, who guides students through the course and provides ongoing instruction and feedback. Students attend the BLL during the school day and are free to work on their online class anytime, from anywhere.
By creating a BLL partnership, we can provide a student-focused, technology-based education available to all New Hampshire residents. Together, we are re-inventing the world of learning and providing the skills and knowledge necessary for student success.

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Section 2: Contact Information
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VLACS BLL Liaison
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Technology Support
Guidance Support
Student Help Desk

Section 3: Blended Learning Lab Role and Responsibility Plans

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VLACS BLL Enrollment Procedures
VLACS Liaison Role and Responsibility Plan
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School Counselor Support
IEPs/504 Plan Students
Suggested Practices in the BLL
Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment

Section 1: Virtual Learning Academy Charter School Overview

Mission
"Our mission is to use the latest technology to provide our students with anytime, unlimited access to a rigorous, personalized education that helps students learn today, graduate tomorrow and prepare for the future."

Overview
VLACS is New Hampshire's' first, statewide, online virtual public high school and middle school where we offer students the opportunity to learn at their own pace from anywhere. Students thrive with our one-to-one student to instructor ratio, and are taught by highly qualified, New Hampshire-state certified instructors. Instructors and students interact regularly through email, voice mail, telephone and instant messenger. Students
are encouraged to contact the instructor when there is a need of any kind.

Instructors speak via telephone with students and their parents at least once a month.

Why online learning?

Given the technology in the present day, learning takes all forms. Young people are brought up with iPads and Kindles, texting on their iPhones, and are mesmerized by the world of online Apps. With the direction that technology and adolescent life is moving, students are becoming brighter and deeper thinkers much earlier in their life. It is the job of the education system to utilize these changes and keep young minds moving throughout their lives.
Online learning is a system that can be compatible with a student who is motivated, self-sufficient, and creative. There are several benefits that are attributed to this style of education, which will complement any student eager to learn.

- Offering over 100 classes, taught by more than 125 instructors, VLACS offers a valuable educational experience for those who desire a flexible schedule. We offer the option to take courses **wherever** and **whenever** you want.
- Course material is available 24/7, allowing students to work at a time they learn best throughout the day. With an online, personalized approach, each student can take the time to comprehend each section of a course.
- The idea of "Student-Centered Teaching" is achieved by allowing students to learn the way **they** need to learn. With a personalized learning approach, learning is a one-to-one ratio with instructors focusing on one student at a time.
- Participation will become easier with the idea of anonymity. Students will be more apt to raise questions and more thought will be put into how they participate.

What does it take to be a successful online learner?

Answer the following questions. All students that are willing to work hard can be successful online students. Even if you don't naturally come by the following skills, everyone can develop the following skills and be successful as an online learner!

Remember, you are not alone, our instructors are eager to help if you are motivated.
. Do I own or have access to a computer with Internet access and email?
. Am I willing and able to learn and apply new software applications?
. Can I set a personal schedule and complete assigned work by the required dates?
. Can I solve problems and work through difficulties independently?
. Can I read and follow detailed instructions on my own?
. Are my writing and communication skills average or are you willing to work to develop your communication skills?
. Am I comfortable using the Internet as a means of communication and research?
. Do I know how to, or am I willing to learn to, copy, cut, and paste text/files between programs?
. Can I devote at least as much time to my online class as to my other classes?
. Can I fit in my online studies with my traditional academic pursuits, personal life, extracurricular activities, volunteer activities, and paid job?
Source: Florida Virtual School

Who are our students?
Public 65% Gender: Female 57%
Home Educated 23% Male 43%
VLACS Full Time 5%
Private School 3%
Drop-Out 3%
Charter School 1%

Why do students take our courses?
There are five main reasons why students are attracted to online learning at VLACS.

• **Flexibility**: Students need to work outside of the classroom because of extracurricular activities such as sports, arts, and travel. The independent schedule of an online course provides a student with flexibility to learn at any time of the day. There are also students dealing with an illness or injury that prevents them from physically being in the classroom.

• **School Limitation**: Either their school doesn't offer a particular course or there is a scheduling conflict.

• **Competency Requirements:** If students need to make up just a portion (or a competency) of a class, online learning provides those options.

• **High Academic Standards**: VLACS partnership programs provide options for high school students wanting to earn advanced placement credit or even college credit. Additionally, advanced students takes courses above their grade level while in high school or middle school.

• **High Risk Students**: Students needing to make-up credits or a failed course or have been suspended can easily take VLACS courses. Enrolling in a course is an alternative to withdrawing from school.

Competency Recovery
As part of our curriculum, Virtual Learning Academy offers a competency recovery program. Each course is made up of a certain number of competencies or fundamentals, and the student needs to pass each section. If, for example, a student mastered and passed eight of the 10 key concepts or competencies for a course, he/she can re-learn just those two key competencies, rather than repeating the complete course. The competency recovery program allows the student a complete understanding of the whole course.

Experiential Learning Opportunity
The Experiential Learning Opportunity (ELO) program is very exciting! You can design your own learning environment with work or an internship that can apply towards your education. For instance, you may already be working or volunteering at a business or service where you are learning various practical elements that could be counted for credit.
Choose a particular course where several of the competencies would be met through your hands-on experience. You would work with a VLACS instructor to design and complete the ELO and the agreed upon course work. The student then uses completed online course work or real-world experiences to demonstrate understanding of course competencies.

Dual Enrollment
As a high school student, you may be able to get a head start on college course work and start earning college credits!

VLACS has partnered with the **Community College System of New Hampshire**, as well as **Southern New Hampshire University**, to present students with the opportunity to get a head start on the college experience.

eStart is a partnership between VLACS and the Community College System of New Hampshire. These are high school courses that have been designed to meet college standards. Credits earned through eStart are dual credits: high school and college. Any New Hampshire junior or senior from high school, private school, alternative school or home educated can take 100% online courses taught by CCSNH instructors. eStart follows a college calendar for registration, course schedule and finals. Tuition is just $150 per course which covers the cost of the college credit. Those credits can be used
toward a degree program at CCSNH or other postsecondary institutions. Course grades will be included on VLACS transcripts as well as CCSNH transcripts.
UStart is a partnership between VLACS and Southern New Hampshire University.

These courses have been designed to meet college standards and are taught by
VLACS instructors who have been certified as adjunct instructors by SNHU. Students have the option to select from a wide array of courses for both high school and college credit. Students may work at their own pace as long as they complete all coursework by June 15 and are making consistent progress and remain in contact with their instructor.

Tuition is just $100 per course. Course grades will be included on VLACS transcripts as well as SNHU transcripts.

Learning at VLACS

Completing Assignments: When starting the course, students have access to all assignments, however, access to tests or quizzes may not be available until students complete certain assignments. Students move sequentially through the course and may be allowed to occasionally move ahead or test out of certain areas, pending instructor approval.

The Grade Book: Every graded assessment is recorded in the student's personal grade book, which is available to all parents who know the student's username and password—something we highly recommend! Routinely monitoring grades allows you to see student progress over time. Parents can review all graded assignments and current overall grade average.

Workload Expectation: Each student is required to submit a specific amount of work each week to maintain the appropriate pace decided on by the instructor and student. The number of required weekly submissions depends upon the course taken. A student's failure to maintain pace results in warnings, reduced grades and, if unheeded, withdrawal from the course.

The Pace Chart: All VLACS courses have a Pace Chart embedded in them. This allows a student to know exactly what instructors expect him or her to submit on a weekly basis, whether the student chooses a traditional, extended or accelerated pace.

Instructors assist students in modifying the chart to reflect their chosen pace.

Section 2: Contact Information

VLACS Website vlacs.org
VLACS Office Phone (603) 778-2500
VLACS Fax Number (866) 651-5038
VLACS Mailing Address PO Box 1050
Exeter, NH 03833
VLACS BLL Liaison gsudduth@vlacs.org
gtirone@vlacs.org
Academic Support info@vlacs.org
Technology Support helpdesk@vlacs.org
Guidance Support guidance@vlacs.org
Student Help Desk helpdesk@vlacs.org

Section 3: Blended Learning Lab Role and Responsibility Plans

VLACS Role and Responsibilities

In order to support student, parents, and schools for Blended Learning Lab (BLL) success, Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS) will provide:

- Free initial training and ongoing support for the BLL facilitator.

- How-to tutorials and materials for students, parents and BLL lab facilitator (registration, access support, course navigation, etc.)

- Updated VLACS information to school counselors through partner website and Newsletters • Academic and technical helpdesk available to students and BLL facilitator.

- Highly Qualified Teacher for each VLACS course.

- Access to a VLACS partnership website with resources, forums with other schools, etc.

- Instructor welcome call with student and parent/guardian for each new enrollment prior to student beginning course work.

- Student pace charts to promote steady progress throughout the course.

- Access student progress information for trained school staff.

- VLACS liaison quarterly visits to school.

- VLACS liaison communications with BLL facilitator twice a month.

- The BLL Handbook to each BLL facilitator and appropriate district and building administrator(s).

Virtual Learning Academy Charter School Enrollment Procedures

VLACS Liaison (VL) Role and Responsibility Plan

VLACS will:

- Make quarterly visits to BLLs.
- Communicate two times per month with BLL facilitator.
- Be the VLACS contact person for school BLL facilitator.
- Be available to direct school questions to appropriate VLACS personnel for any teacher/technology/guidance concerns.
- Seek feedback from VLACS instructors and VLL facilitator on progress of BLL labs share with appropriate individual(s).
- Pull data of the BLL program to monitor progress.
- Report concerns and successes to VLACS administrator.
- Coordinate informal online video sessions with VLACS instructor and BLL Facilitator.

VLACS instructors' Role and Responsibility Plan

VLACS instructors will:

• Contact parent & student no later than one week after appearing as "assigned" in Genius by sending an introductory email; the purpose of which is to schedule the required Welcome Call.

• Review course information & navigation with parent(s) & student, as well as an overview of VLACS policies and procedures during the welcome call.

• Have an informal relationship with the VLL Facilitator. Any academic issue that arises will still be directed to the appropriate VLACS area: Guidance, Instruction, Academic Support, and Technology.

• Maintain regular communication with student, monitor student progress and promptly contact students who are not meeting agreed upon pace.

• Conduct monthly phone call and issue monthly progress reports.

• Provide feedback that is specific, timely, and succinct for ease of student use. Students can then resubmit with specified corrections and then be redirected with additional feedback or corrections.

• Verify that all course requirements have been met, conduct a transition or final phone call with both the student and parent prior to providing the password to the approved proctor for either the midterm or final exam.

District & School Blended Learning Lab Role and Responsibility Plan

In order to support students, parents and staff for Blended Learning Lab (BLL) success, the district and/or school administration will:

- Provide parent/student orientation to the Virtual Learning Academy Charter School Courses and Programs.

- Understand that students can enroll in VLACS courses and programs outside of the BLL.

- Encourage parent involvement by working with their son/daughter to establish a VLACS online account, course registration, and monitoring of student progress.

- Post VLACS web links to the District's site.

- Identify a school lab facilitator to be the contact for communication with VLACS with the expectation that he/she establish an understanding for processing questions and concerns using existing VLACS supports.

- Communicate any overarching concerns or recommendations for improvements with VLACS Liaison.

- Identify and provide supports to ensure student success.

- Designate individual[team] to attend a VLACS training session for orientation and effective facilitation of a Learning Lab environment for successful virtual coursework.

- Establish communication between guidance, BLL and school staff

BLL Technology Requirements

As long as you have Internet access, you can take courses with VLACS. While it is possible to take courses with dial-up connectivity, it will take a little longer for pages to load.

You might want to print a few lessons and work offline. You can then save and upload work when you are finished.

VLACS Communicator (Primary communication tool with instructors)

- Headset with microphone
- Mac - Safari or Firefox browser
- PC - Mozilla Firefox browser

Browser Plug-ins
- Sun Java 1.6 JRE or higher
- Flash 10.0 or higher
- Acrobat Reader, 9.0 or higher recommended

PC Requirements
- Dual-core or modern single-core CPU (1Ghz minimum, dual-core and faster recommended)
- Minimum of 6 gig free HDD space
- 56k internet connection. A broadband connection is highly recommended
- Windows Vista or Windows 7 (32 or 64-bit)
- Microsoft Office or Open Office
- 1 Gb Ram for Vista or 7, (2Gb or more is highly recommended)
- 12x CD-ROM (CD/DVD Recommended)
- Display setting 1024x768 resolution
- Printer required
- Internet Explorer (web browsing software) - version 8.0 or higher
- Mozilla Firefox, 12.0 or later is highly recommended
- Flash 10.0 or later player (Click here to download)
- Students need a method to save work to a removable disk (Floppy, CD/DVD, USB Flash Drive)
- Audio: Headset with microphone
- America Online and KOL are not recommended

Macintosh Requirements

- Intel Core 2 Duo or later
- Mac OS X 10.4.9, 10.6.x or later highly recommended
- Microsoft Office or Open Office
- Students need a method to save work to a removable disk (USB Flash Drive or CD/DVD)
- 1Gb of ram minimum, unless running 10.7.x which should run 2Gb. 4Gb recommended.
- Minimum of 5 gig free HDD space
- 12x CD ROM (CD/DVD Recommended)
- 56k internet connection. A broadband connection is highly recommended.
- Display setting 1024x768 resolution
- Printer required
- Mozilla Firefox, 12.0 or later is highly recommended
- Flash 10.0 or later player (Click here to download)
- Audio: Headset with microphone
- America Online and KOL are not recommended

Lab Facilitator Role and Responsibility Plan for BLL Success

In order to support students, parents, and staff for Blended Learning Lab (BLL) success, the lab facilitator will:

- Serve as a school liaison to VLACS.

- Assist students with the registration process.

- Advise the student to communicate with the local school guidance staff to get necessary approvals for receiving credit for VLACS course.

- Monitor student progress and meet periodically with students to ensure that they are working on their courses and staying on pace.

- Encourage and support student communication with the VLACS instructors, VLACS office, or help desk.

- Encourage and support transmission of student assignments via fax, scan, upload, etc.

- Communicate to local school staff or VLACS office (info, guidance, or help desk) problems such as:
    - Students pending course placement for more than a week.
    - Students being dropped from VLACS courses.
    - Blocked welcome pages, websites, or broken links.
    - Equipment or software issues in the blended learning lab.

- Call VLACS when in doubt (603-778-2500). Ask for guidance, info, or technical support.

- Attend a VLACS Partnership Training to better understand VLACS procedures.

- Help students understand that it will be necessary for them to work on VLACS courses outside of the BLL.

- Understand that registration is not completed without parent/guardian approval.

- Understand that a Welcome Call must take place before starting a course.

- Participants in a welcome call must include the VLACS instructor, student, and parent/guardian.

- Ensure that students have access to a phone or VLACS communication tool for discussion based assignments and/or oral assessments

- Make parents and students aware that students may finish on a different timeline than that of the traditional school.
- Understand that courses do not have a specific start and end date.
- Be an advocate for the student and for online learning.
- Aid students use VLACS help sessions, review lessons, exam preparation, etc.
- Create and maintain motivational activities for students.
- Work with the VLACS liaison to schedule onsite meetings with the BLL students.
- If serving as proctor, review and follow VLACS proctoring guidelines.

Parent or Guardian Role and Responsibility Plan for Blended Learning Lab Success

In order to support students, school, and staff for Blended Learning Lab (BLL) success, the parent or guardian will:

- Approve student course selection using parent/guardian account. Account is automatically created when student selects a course. Note student will not be assigned without approval.

- Monitor student's progress regularly through their guardian account

- Be available for instructor calls, including the welcome call and monthly call

- Review monthly progress reports to insure student success

- Contact your VLACS instructor with questions and concerns

Sample Letter to Parent and/or Guardian

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This letter is to notify you that your child has been chosen to enroll in an online course with Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS) and will take the course during the school day in the school's Blended Learning Lab (BLL). Your child was selected for this program because staff believes that he/she will succeed in the virtual environment.

The advantages of virtual education include self-paced learning and access to courses which may not be available or accessible during the traditional school day due to scheduling conflicts. VLACS courses are available 24/7, throughout the year. VLACS instructors are available during weekly office hours. All VLACS instructors post their hours of availability on their course page, which is the first page a student accesses when he/she enters his/her course. Students may communicate with his/her VLACS instructors by phone, email, IM, text, or while online within his/her VLACS course. Since the courses are available 24/7, students may access his/her work from home or the library after school and on weekends. Additionally, the BLL lab facilitator will be available to offer support during the traditional school day.

In order to provide more opportunities for students to interact with instructors and gain valuable support, VLACS offers an academic helpdesk through the student's course page.

The Academic Helpdesk provides live academic support if the student's instructor is not available.

Parents can monitor student progress through their account, which is automatically created during student enrollment process. If you do not have Internet access, please contact your school's BLL lab facilitator to discuss options. Additionally, parent information sessions are held on the first Monday and second Wednesday of each month.

Visit www.vlacs.org for more information.

Online learning has many benefits. When used in conjunction with traditional learning, it creates a rigorous, interactive environment that reaches students in several ways. It is our hope that all BLL students will learn and grow while taking their VLACS course.

Sincerely,
Principal / Guidance Counselor

Student Role and Responsibility Plan for Blended Learning Lab Success

In order to support other students, school, and staff for Blended Learning Lab (BLL) success, the student will:

- Maintain pace charts.
- Contact VLACS teacher with questions and concerns.
- Investigate and seek additional options for computer time.
- Attend help sessions and tutoring and exam reviews.
- Complete lessons and homework on a regular basis.
- Comply with Code of Conduct.
- Apply high standards and academic integrity to all coursework and exams.

Student Code of Conduct/Acceptable Use Policy

VIRTUAL LEARNING ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL POLICY
STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT (IJND)

Internet access is required for all VLACS students, but access must be used in a responsible, safe, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. 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.

Please review the following netiquette rules and VLACS expectations carefully:

1. Students are responsible for good behavior on the VLACS course management system, just as they are in a traditional school building.

2. Always use a computer in a way that shows consideration and respect.

3. It is illegal to use obscene, profane, threatening, or disrespectful language. (f.s.847.001 Obscene Literature; Profanity).

4. We take integrity and authenticity of student work very seriously at VLACS. Do not cut, copy, or plagiarize Internet content or the work of your online classmates. VLACS instructors do utilize technologies to check for authenticity. Copying, knowingly allowing others to copy from you, and/or misusing Internet content could result in removal from our courses.

5. Security is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If you can identify a security problem in the school's computers, network, or Internet connection, notify a teacher or other school personnel.

6. It is illegal to create harmful computer viruses. (f.s. 815 Computer-Related Crimes).

7. Email is not private. Never say anything via email that you wouldn't mind seeing on the school bulletin board or in the local newspaper.

8. Beware of emails from anyone, particularly adults you don't know, asking for personal information, attempting to arrange meetings, or engaging in personal contact. Alert your teacher or other Virtual Learning Academy Charter School employee of any message you receive that is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable.

9. Email with your online classmates should be course-related. It is prohibited to send unsolicited email to your online classmates.

10. Email addresses that use profanity or may be construed as offensive, shall not be permitted for VLACS correspondence. The VLACS administration reserves the right to determine if student email addresses are inappropriate. When necessary, students will be asked to use an alternative email address or the will not be allowed to participate in VLACS courses.

11. Protect your password. Keep it secret from anyone except your parents.

12. Virtual Learning Academy Charter School assumes no responsibility for any phone charges, line costs or usage fees for connectivity to the Internet.

Virtual Learning Academy Charter School administrators will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through Internet access. In the event there is a claim that you have violated this policy, you will be provided with notice of the suspected violation and have an opportunity to present an explanation. Any violations may result in removal from VLACS course(s), as well as other disciplinary or legal action.

Law Reference: Appendix Reference: Date Adopted: Revision Dates:
Last Review Date:

Ensuring Academic Integrity in the BLL Setting Student Academic Integrity Role

VIRTUAL LEARNING ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL POLICY
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (JIC)

VLACS expects a full commitment to academic integrity from each VLACS student. Completion of the enrollment process signifies a student commitment to academic integrity as a student at VLACS.

Academic integrity means:

- Your work on each assignment will be completely your own.

- Your collaboration with another classmate on any assignment will be preapproved by your instructor.
- You will not practice plagiarism in any form.

- You will not allow others to copy your work.

- You will not misuse content from the Internet.

- Plagiarism is defined as follows: copying or using ideas or words (from another person, an online classmate, or an Internet or print source) and presenting them as your own.

- Please be aware that all VLACS instructors utilize a myriad of technologies to check student work for authenticity. If an instructor confirms that a student has plagiarized work in any manner, the student will be subject to consequences determined by VLACS administration and may be removed from the course with a failing grade.

Law Reference: Appendix Reference: Date Adopted: Revision Dates:
Last Review Date:

VLACS Instructors Academic Integrity Role

Each staff member has a stake in ensuring the highest standards of academic integrity. Teachers synchronize various aspects of VLACS courses to ensure the best possible experiences for their students.

BLL Facilitator Academic Integrity Role

Each lab facilitator has a stake in ensuring the highest standards of academic integrity for all students in the lab setting. Facilitators will:

- Provide supervision through close proximity while circulating the lab.

- Encourage students to seek support from VLACS instructors.

- Encourage student to seek support from the facilitator.

- Discourage inappropriate collaboration of students.
- Ensure students are provided with appropriate equipment and that equipment is not shared by students who are actively working in the same VLACS coursework.

- Require that students protect their password information and coursework.

- Protect students' usernames, passwords, and other private information.

- Adjust seating arrangements to help promote students' integrity.

- Communicate with the student, VLACS instructor and guidance personnel with regards to concerns and consequences.

Guide to Proctored VLACS Exams in the BLL Proctor Guidelines

A person willing to facilitate an exam as a proctor must be a trusted individual who can take on a supervisory role in the administration of midterm or final exams. The responsibilities of a proctor are outlined below. We ask that all proctors adhere to these responsibilities when administering a test. The student is responsible for making initial contact with the proctor to make the necessary arrangements for taking a test. The proctor should have access to e-mail and the Internet as important messages and/or tests may be sent via email.

Note: All students regardless of age, including those 18 years and older, are required to have a proctor for all password protected exams.

Guidelines

1. Verify the identity of the student.

2. Provide a quiet and private atmosphere for test administration.

3. Guarantee the ethical conduct of the student during the test period as provided with the exam instructions.

4. The student may not view the test prior to the date/time arranged for taking the test.

5. The proctor shall not share the exam password with the student, including those 18 years and older.

6. The student is responsible for bringing any necessary supplies, such as pens, pencils and blank paper.

7. The student should not be left unattended at any time during the course of the test.

8. The student is not allowed to copy any questions during the test for use thereafter.

9. The course instructor will inform the proctor of an average estimated completion time based on previous students' performances. If a student must return to complete an exam at a later time, proctors should guide students to use the "Save without submitting" button located at the bottom of the exam page. Proctors should inform students to use this "save" option frequently during the exam in order to protect completed questions.

10. Passwords change regularly. If the password you've been given doesn't open the exam, please contact the student's instructor.

Process

1. The student will recommend a proctor to his/her instructor. Suggested individuals who may be approved as proctors include: parents, legal guardians, guidance counselors, other school administrators or teachers, media specialists.

2. If the instructor approves the proctor, then the exam password will be sent to the proctor via email or telephone 24-48 hours before the exam. Passwords will not be sent to a parent/guardian if the student and parent share the same email address.

3. The instructor will notify the student and proctor about the use of notes, books, or other resources during the exam. In most cases, students will not be able to use additional resources during the exam.

4. The proctor and student agree on a time and place to take the exam.

5. The proctor verifies that the student is logging into the appropriate course and enters the password when prompted by the student.

6. The proctor is to supervise the student during the entire exam session. The proctor shall not supply answers or provide assistance with understanding or answering any exam questions.

7. At the end of the exam, the proctor verifies that the student has logged out of the course and closed all browser windows.

Section 4: Student Services School Counselor Support

The local school counselor will:

- Verify that students are enrolled in academically appropriate course work after having met all prerequisites.

- Ensure that the student is not currently enrolled for the same course and segment within the regular school day, night school, or any other education program.

- Advise BLL seniors to inform their VLACS instructors of graduation/final grade deadlines.

- Notify the VLACS instructor and/or BLL facilitator of schedule changes that may impact the student's participation in the course.

- Provide assistance in obtaining a copy of the student's IEP or 504 plan.

IEP and 504 Plan Students
Individualized Education Plans and Section 504 Accommodations Plan Operating Policies/Guidelines

Although VLACS courses include many standard IEP accommodations, the Student/ Parent/Guardian and School of Record (SOR) have the following responsibilities:

- The parent/Guardian must upload their student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Accommodations Plan (504 Plan) into the student information system (SIS).

- It is the responsibility of the SOR to maintain the IEP and 504 Plan for a student attending VLACS.

- The SOR is responsible to continue to offer any current services utilized by a student as indicated in their IEP or 504 Plan
- VLACS is not the SOR and will not change or edit the IEP or 504 Plan.

- Special education decision-making stays with the SOR, as does the special education funding.

Suggested Practices for Online Learning Success

- Use a structured and quiet learning environment.
- Use read-along/audio files for supporting reading of lessons.
- Use one-to-one tutorials with online sessions or over the phone.
- Use peer tutoring.
- Highlight main ideas and supporting details in text,
- Print and follow course pace charts.
- Print instructor contact information.
- Communicate with instructor about emergencies, vacations or special situations.
- Use reading/organizational strategies such as graphic organizers.
- Participate in monthly phone calls with parent and instructor(s).
- Request supplemental materials for extra practice (i.e., outlines, study guides).
- Repeat directions/assignments to lab facilitator or parent to insure understanding.
- Utilize VLACS Academic and Technical Help Desks.

Advanced Placement®* (AP®) and Dual Credit (UStart, eStart***)**

• AP and dual credit curriculum is academically rigorous, at the college level with regard to degree of challenge. It is strongly encouraged that potential students have a previous classroom experience with AP or a high degree of success in honors/advanced level curriculum.

• AP and dual credit courses will require work outside of the lab environment, taking more time than a regular/honors course to complete. Thus, it is vital for students to have computer access before/after school, at home, local libraries, etc.

• Students should show an interest and commitment to the AP curriculum prior to enrolling, thus ensuring successful performance on the AP course exam in May.

• Parent involvement is key to AP and dual credit student success.

• Students are highly encouraged to communicate regularly with their instructors via IM, text, phone, and email to ensure their ongoing success with the coursework.

• It is highly recommended that students attend instructor tutoring sessions, large group and one-on-one, on a regular basis.

• Students should work with their instructors to determine a course completion timeline.

• Access to IM in the labs would provide a means for students to communicate with their instructors, receive an instant response to questions, and allow for one-on-one progress checks.

***AP and Advanced Placement Program are registered trademarks of the College Board, which was not involved in**
the production of, and does not endorse, this product.
****UStart is affiliated with Southern New Hampshire University.**
*****eStart is affiliated with the Community College System of New Hampshire.**

APPENDIX B

Using Low Cost Commodity Technology for Remote Classroom Instruction

Manchester School District

Jeffrey F. DeLangie Sr., Director, Technology Resource Center

November 7, 2012

The Manchester School District will utilize low cost commodity technology to extend learning opportunity across the district. Specifically, this technology will benefit under-subscribed course subject areas such as Language Arts as well as provide a cost effective platform to extend learning by connecting geographically disparate learning sites. Remote learning will also provide a number of benefits to the school district including; better utilization of educator resources; more time available in class for students; reduced travel costs; and increased safety. The basic building blocks of the remote learning environment consist of a high quality; low cost, 60" or larger digital TV, a quality camera (see Figure A1) and software which allow communications between the participating sites. The TV best suited to this task is a "smart" TV referring to its embedded computer operating system as well as a compliment of applications that support online collaboration. In addition to free Skype video conference software and Internet browser capability, a suite of complimentary built in educational applications add value to the collaborative learning environment.

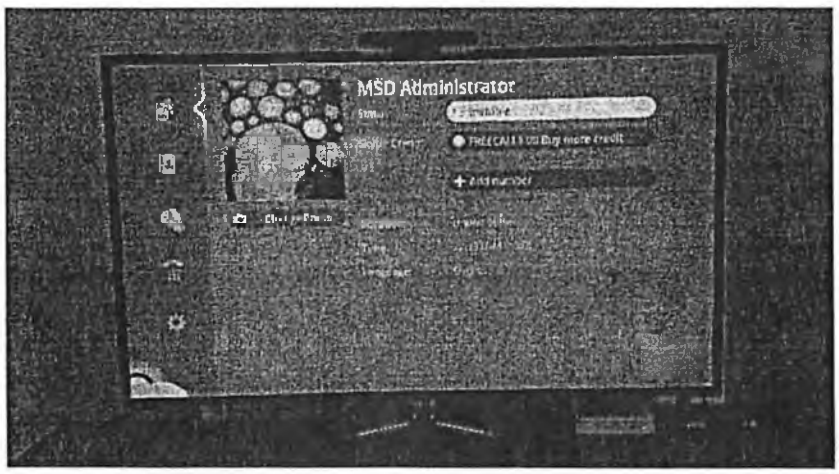

Figure A1

Integrated into the camera are quality microphones that allow clear voice pickup up to 25 feet away. Advanced zoom control allows the educator to focus up close on an instructional manipulative or individual demonstration. Graphical user interface options including call answer as well as pan and zoom control are handled with an easy to use remote control. A wireless keyboard with integrated mouse pad facilitates typed data input.

Participant Capacity

A wide angle camera mounted on the top of the TV screen provides a clear picture with a field of view extending to 176 degrees. This allows classroom seating arrangements that are well suited to group instruction where the instructor, remote participants and instructional whiteboard is within view of both local and remote viewers. To accommodate the maximum number of participants within the viewable camera area seating might be arranged in two rows (see Figure A2) with the TV at one end and Instructional Whiteboard at the other. In this configuration 10 to 12 students can collaborate effectively in classroom discussion. Connecting a remote site would enable 20 to 24 participants.

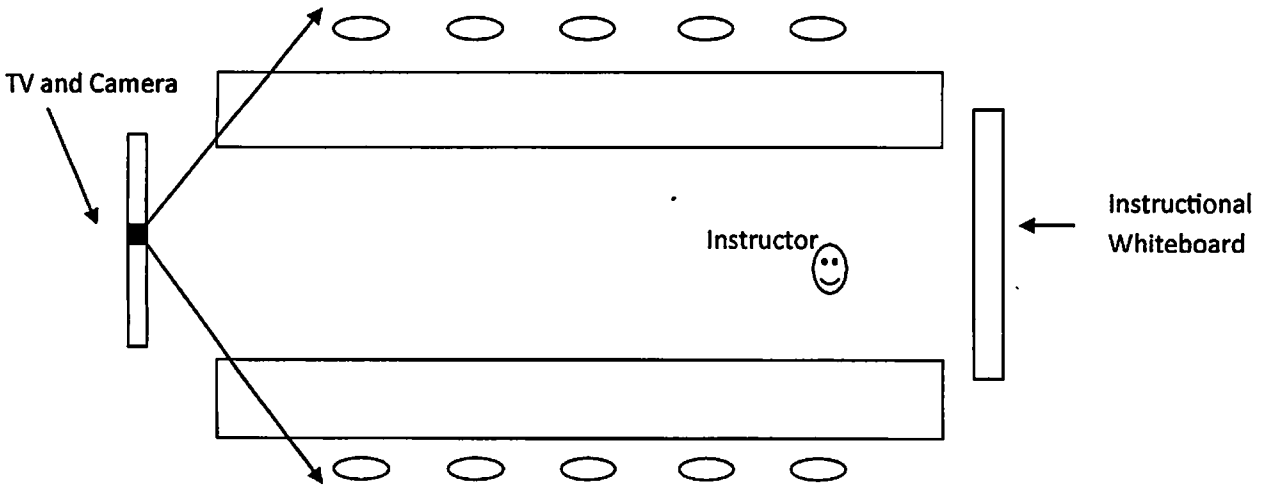

Figure A2

UTILIZING COMMODITY TECHNOLOGY FOR REMOTE CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

Skype Options

The free version of Skype will support 1 session connecting 2 sites. The addition of Skype Business Edition ($4 per month) would enable a practical addition of 3 additional sites[1] for a total potential user participation of approximately 100 students. Certainly this number of students may not be practical from a classroom management perspective, but illustrates the potential collaboration capabilities for little cost.

Dedicated Internet Connection

Dedicated connection to the internet configured with ample bandwidth is required to support multiple real time collaboration. The Manchester School District will leverage its recent upgrade of individual dedicated school internet connectivity to provide the needed connection capacity.

Cost

The component cost to outfit a typical classroom includes TV($1000), Camera($199), Wireless Keyboard($30), Skype software($0). The total per site cost would be $1,229.

Summary

With the commoditization of video, internet and collaboration software technologies, providing low cost real time conference capabilities are now a reality. As a result the Manchester School District can capitalize on this opportunity to add significant value to its instructional capacity in extending learning to students who otherwise may not have the opportunity.

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[1] Each site would appear on the TV within a window. With 4 total sites the TV would display 4 independent windows with multiple participants in each window.