



MINNESOTATM
VIRTUAL HIGH SCHOOL

2010/2011 Parent Student Handbook

Minnesota Virtual High School
A Partner of Minnesota Transitions Charter School
Parent/Student Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

Minnesota Virtual High School is an online program offered by Minnesota Transitions Charter School that delivers accredited curriculum via the internet. We provide a comprehensive library of core courses and electives, including advanced placement and foreign language courses. In addition, we offer a 24/7 student support environment including highly qualified, state-certified teachers who are available to support you!

Accreditation

The Minnesota Virtual High School program is a fully-accredited online solution for students who need an alternative to the traditional classroom environment. Our online courses are provided by Advanced Academics. Advanced Academics is accredited by North Central Association (NCA) and Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation (CITA). Accreditation will allow your student to transfer their credits to most high schools, colleges and universities.

Contact Information and Services

MVHS provides certified instructors and teaching assistants to administer the academic needs of our students. Teachers and teaching assistants are available from Sunday 10 p.m. CST through Friday 10:00 p.m. CST. MVHS also provides technical support 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Our education and technical support departments can be reached via our toll-free number at 1.866.2eLEARN (1.866.235.3276). Our counselors can be reached at 612-604-5352.

Student Achievement Coordinators and Academic Counselors are available to assist students. Counselors provide assistance with transcript reviews, assist with appropriate class selection and provide academic counseling to assist students with post-secondary placement. Student Achievement Coordinators track student progress and course engagement. Students are expected to maintain regular contact with their Student Achievement Coordinator to ensure successful and timely course completion. Student Achievement Coordinators are available at 1.866.235.3276, option 4. To reach your personal counselor, please call 612-604-5352.

Platform and Course Delivery

All classes are accessible online by via our platform at <http://roads.advancedacademics.com>.

After being enrolled, students will also receive their username and password via email which are required to access their courses. Students will receive a welcome email from a MVHS instructor. During this communication, the student will receive an overview of their course expectations, 25% complete date, and course term ending date. Upon logging in for the first time, students will receive an introductory course which will demonstrate how to access courses, use the student locker function, and communication tools.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Student Enrollment Information and Process

Note: As a result of the US Supreme Court Ruling, school personnel may not deny admission to a student during initial enrollment or any other time on basis of undocumented status; or require

parents or students to disclose their immigration status or social security numbers, which may expose undocumented status. (458 U.S. 1131{1982})

MVHS Enrollment Process*:

1. To be considered for enrollment the student must meet the following:
 - a) Must hold residency in Minnesota
 - b) Students must be in grades 6-12 and under the age of 21.
 - c) Must supply transcripts or academic records of previous education (public school, homeschool, IEP).
2. Acceptance into MVHS is contingent upon the receipt of the enrollment packet and required documents.

Enrollment packet includes:

- a) Registration Forms
- b) Emergency Contact Information
- c) Attendance Agreement
- d) Application for Educational Benefits (Free and Reduced Lunch Form) AEB
- e) Hardware and Internet Connection Agreement

Required Documents are:

- a) Transcript or Academic Record
- b) MCA (Grad)/BST Test Scores
- c) Immunization Records

3. Upon acceptance of your enrollment packet by MVHS, the following steps will occur:
 - a) Academic counselor determines class schedule
 - a. Official transcripts from an accredited school or academics records will be reviewed to determine the courses to which the student will be enrolled.
 - b) Academic counselor enrolls student in classes
 - c) Student receives enrollment notification email
 - d) MVHS Instructor initiates welcome call
 - e) Student completes Introductory Course
 - f) Student begins classes

*** Students are required to inform their Student Achievement Coordinator at 1.866.235.3276, option 4, if there is a change of address or phone number. A student's demographic information must be kept current at all times.**

Repeating Course(s)

If a student does not pass a class with a 60% or higher, then the course will be repeated. Students who fail a course are responsible for working with their academic counselor to be re-enrolled in the course. Students are ultimately responsible for ensuring that all graduation requirements have been met.

Transfer Credits

Official transcripts are required in order to properly transfer credits to the student. How credits are accepted depends on the course and graduation requirements.

Academic Calendar

When a student is enrolled in a semester course, they will have a full semester term to complete the course unless otherwise stated. If a student is not able to work on the classes for any reason, they should notify their Student Achievement Coordinator immediately.

Dropping Course(s)

Students under the age of 18 wishing to drop a course must have a parent or legal guardian submit a written request to the academic counselor. A course drop is not official until it has been expressly approved by the academic counselor. The written request must include the following:

- Student Name
- Parent Name (if the student is 18 and under)
- Reason for request
- The course(s) the student wishes to drop

Once an academic counselor has approved the drop of the course(s), parents and students will receive written confirmation that the drop is official. Students must continue to work in their courses until the drop has been confirmed.

Students wishing to withdraw from ALL of their classes must following the procedures set forth by the withdrawal policy.

Withdrawal Policy

Students planning on returning to their resident school district should follow the below procedures:

- a) Student contacts their Student Achievement Coordinator to request withdrawal from MVHS.
 - i. Student Achievement Coordinator sends withdrawal form to student
- b) Student sends back withdrawal form to Student Achievement Coordinator
- c) The resident school district requests a transcript from MVHS.
- d) Only after MVHS has receives a Notification of Change in Student Enrollment form (NCSE) from the resident school district that the student will be attending, will the student be completely withdrawn from all courses.

Students must continue to work in their courses until the withdrawal has been approved.

Special Education Services for Students

In accordance with state and federal mandates, MVHS serves students with disabilities. Every student is entitled to a free appropriate public education and placement in the least restrictive environment. MVHS actively works with families to be sure that students receive all the educational benefits for which they are entitled.

MVHS serves students with Individualized Educational Plans (IEP) and Section 504 plans. If you suspect that your child has a disability, please contact MVHS as ask for assistance. Please be aware that the on-line learning experience will not accommodate all IEP students. Students with an IEP will be evaluated on an individual basis to ensure the opportunity for success.

Special Education Records

When a student reaches graduation or age 21, a request to have special education records destroyed can be made. This request can be made by the graduated student (age 18 or older), the non-graduated student, age 21 or older or by a person assigned as guardian to the student.

To request that special education records be destroyed, please write to the Special Education Director, MN Virtual High School, P.O. Box 6024, Minneapolis, MN 55406-0024.

Student Records (Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act)

Under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA 34 CAR Part 99), parents of currently enrolled students at MVHS (or as an eligible student of 18 years of age) have the right to:

- a) Inspect and review their student's educational records;
- b) Request the amendment of their student's educational records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights;
- c) Consent to the disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in their student's educational records, except to the extent that the act and its regulations authorize disclosure without consent;
- d) File with the U.S. Department of Education a complaint under the provisions of the Act concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of the act; In accordance with state and federal privacy laws, students who attain the age of 18 may transfer certain rights related to their academic records.

No member of the MVHS staff is authorized to release student information without the written permission of the student's parent or legal guardian. Names, images, and/or class work of MVHS students will not be published in print, video/film, or on our public website without written student and guardian consent.

Nondiscrimination Policy

Minnesota Virtual High School shall not discriminate or deny entrance to any program, or activity on the basis of sex, race, color, handicapping condition, or national origin.

Graduation Requirements

Upon completion of the application process, your student will receive a form entitled MVHS Credit Count. This form lists all the coursework the student has completed and credit earned towards graduation. It is possible that the credit totals may be different than the previous schools attended, as Minnesota Transitions Charter School is based on 1.5 credits per semester class, with a total of 64.5 needed for graduation. If the total is different, this does not mean that you lost any credits; it is simply the way this school calculates credit.

To receive a diploma from Minnesota Virtual High School, each student is required to receive the following credits per category for a total of 64.5 credits and pass all state mandated graduation tests:

English – Total 12 credits
Math – Total 9 credits
Fine Arts – Total 3 credits
Electives – Total 16.5 credits

Social Studies – Total 12 credits
Science – Total 9 credits
PE/Health – Total 3 credits

Students may request a current credit count by contacting their Academic Counselor.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Created Success – Attendance

Good attendance is essential for school achievement and success. If your child is ill or has a valid excuse of an absence, you must notify the school. Attendance is tracked in our online system and students failing to meet our attendance requirements will be marked absent for the day.

- a) A full time student is required to be online working in their courses no less than 5 hours per school day.
- b) The courses are to be completed within the assigned semester date.
- c) A grade will be issued for each course at the end of the semester term day period.
- d) The final grade for each course will be recorded on the student's transcript.

**** Students are required to inform their Student Achievement Coordinator at 1.866.235.3276, option 4, if there is a change of address or phone number. A student's demographic information must be kept current at all times.***

Student Conduct and Discipline

Student behavior should be based on the respect of others. Students who choose to violate the rules and policies set forth by MVHS will be subject to disciplinary action. The below list includes, but is not limited to, the areas of misconduct to be considered grounds for disciplinary action:

1. Profanity
2. Truancy
3. Failure to complete course work
4. Defiance of authority
5. Violation of district and/or MVHS existing policies

Suspension

Disciplinary actions consist of suspension from the program and courses as determined by district and MVHS administration.

Any inappropriate behavior in the Instant Help Chat feature will result in immediate suspension from Instant Help Chat. Student will still be allowed to access their course(s).

Truancy

Under Minnesota Law, children must go to school everyday from the time they are enrolled until they are eighteen years old, unless they are legally withdrawn at the age of 16 or 17. Absences may be excused for illness, religious observance, court subpoena, extreme family emergency, or funeral. All other absences are presumed to be unexcused. Attendance is tracked in our online system and students failing to meet our attendance requirements will be marked absent for the day. If your child is ill or has a valid excuse of an absence, you must notify the school.

Student Responsibilities to prevent truancy

- a) Students must log on daily (at least 5 out of 7 days in a given week)
- b) To stay on schedule the student must complete a minimum of 25 hours of coursework per week.
- c) Course must be completed within the course term determined at enrollment.
- d) A grade will be issued for each course at the end of the course term.
- e) The final grade for each course will be recorded on the student's transcript.

MVHS acknowledges that parents play a key role in their student's successful completion of coursework to graduate. Parents are able to monitor their student's progress at any time and may call MVHS Academic Counselors with any questions or concerns.

Parent Responsibilities to prevent truancy

- a) The student must engage daily in course work that totals a minimum of 25 hours per week for a full-time enrolled student.
- b) If the student does not show participation in their courses for fifteen (15) consecutive days the student will be considered truant.
- c) If the student is deemed truant and withdraws from MVHS, the primary parent/guardian will have to enroll the student with the resident school district. MVHS will forward truancy information to the appropriate agencies
- d) The parent has the ability to log into their student's account (under 18) at any time and view progress reports

State Mandated Testing


All students enrolled full-time with MVHS are required to participate in state mandated graduation tests and annual assessment tests. Testing facilities are located throughout Minnesota. Parents/students are responsible for the transportation to and from testing facilities. Failure to participate in these tests will result in a delay of receiving a diploma.

ACADEMIC GUIDELINES

Progress Report

Students and parents may check the students' progress by logging into the ROADS system and viewing the student progress report. The progress report is on the home page and all courses in

which the student is enrolled. Listed information includes: **Course Name, Class, Status, % Complete, and Current Grade.**

To access detailed information for each class, click ; this will expand the screen and show all **Graded, Pending, and In-Progress** assessments. Each assessment shows: **Assessment Name, Start Date, End Date, Status, and Grade.**

Reset Policy

The following is the recommended policy for allowing assessment resets. Allowing assessment resets is entirely at the discretion of the instructor. Students are advised to be prepared to take an assessment prior to accessing..

Homework Assignments

A student may retake missed questions for 75% credit on a homework assignment in which he/she has scored 69 or below if the following conditions are met:

- Student must consult with teacher.
- The homework assignment must not have been set for retake at any other time in the past.

Unit Tests

A student may retake missed questions for 50% credit on a unit test in which he/she has scored 69 or below if the following conditions are met:

- Student must consult with teacher.
- Student must have a grade of 70 or above on all homework assignments for that section or unit.
- The test must not have been set for retake at any other time in the past.

Essays and Essay Unit Tests

An essay or essay unit test may be reset for full or partial credit at the teacher's discretion upon student-teacher consultation and in accordance with the plagiarism policy (if applicable).

Midterm and Final Exams

Midterms and final exams will not be reset.

Academic Integrity

MVHS expects a full commitment to academic integrity from each of our students. By enrolling in MVHS your commitment to academic integrity as a student at MVHS will be recorded.

- a) Your work on each assignment will be completely your own.
- b) Your collaboration with another classmate on any assignment will be pre-approved by your instructor.
- c) You will not practice plagiarism in any form.
- d) You will not allow others to copy your work.
- e) You will not misuse content from the Internet.

Plagiarism

What is it and why does it matter?

Plagiarism is using other people's words, phrases, or ideas without giving them credit. Even if you put someone else's ideas into your own words, you must still give them credit. Plagiarism can also take the form of copying the organization and/or sentence structure of another source. Plagiarism is intellectual theft and is unethical. Many colleges and universities expel students who have been found guilty of plagiarizing.

When do I need to document sources used in an assignment?

Here are general guidelines that will help you determine if you need to document any sources used in an assignment. If you have any questions about whether you should document a source, ask your teacher before you turn in the assignment.

You need to document your sources in the following situations:

- When you use or refer to someone else's words or ideas from a magazine, book, newspaper, song, TV program, movie, Web site, computer program, or any other format.
- When you copy the exact words from a source.
- When you paraphrase or summarize someone else's words or ideas.
- When you copy or reprint any diagrams, charts, illustrations, or pictures.

You do NOT need to document sources in these situations:

- When you write from your own experiences, observations, or insights.
- When you write about your own conclusions about a subject or event.
- When you are using "common knowledge" that can be found in several sources. An example of common knowledge is: "George Washington was the first president of the United States." This is a fact that is found in several sources.

How do I document sources in my assignment?

If you have any questions about documenting sources in an assignment, ask your teacher before you turn in the assignment. Also, here are links to information about MLA documentation style, which is the format that many MVHS teachers prefer:

<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/mla.html>

http://campusgw.library.cornell.edu/newhelp/res_strategy/citing/mla.html

<http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocMLA.html>

Consequences for Plagiarizing at Minnesota Virtual High School

If a student plagiarizes an assignment in whole or in part, he or she may retake the assignment for 50% credit. The student's school district will be notified of the plagiarism occurrence. A notation of the plagiarism will be documented in the student's MVHS permanent record. If the student should plagiarize another assignment in any subsequent class or subsequent term, he/she will automatically receive a zero for the assignment with no chance of retaking it. The district will be notified at each occurrence of plagiarism and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

When in doubt, ask your teacher!

TECHNOLOGY AWARENESS

Internet access

Internet access is **required** for all MVHS students. MVHS acknowledges that some sites contain illegal, inaccurate, or offensive information. It is impossible to control such misuses, but MVHS urges our students use the Internet in a responsible, safe, efficient, ethical, and legal manner. With responsible use, the benefits of the Internet as an educational tool will be most beneficial. MVHS assumes no responsibility for any phone charges, line costs or usage fees for connectivity to the Internet.

Security Information

All the data you provide to us is protected to ensure both the privacy and security of your data. We use state-of-the art technology to keep your personal information as secure as possible to ensure that no one will be able to tamper with, intercept, or access your data. Remember to keep your account information private and secure.

Internet Etiquette (Netiquette)

When using the Internet, there are widely accepted rules and behaviors to follow. At times being online can feel “pretend” because you cannot see the person you are communicating with. Students must remember they are dealing with “real” people online and they should use the same manners they would use in a traditional school setting. It also important to note that once the student logs into their ROADS account, all communication via the Instant Help or ClassMail® features are recorded. Below are some general netiquette guidelines to follow:

- Students are responsible for good behavior while logged into the ROADS platform, just as they are in a traditional school building. Always use a computer in a way that shows consideration and respect. It is illegal to use obscene, profane, threatening, or disrespectful language. Also do not threaten or disrespect an instructor or administrator. These actions not only violate the MVHS’s policy, but may violate penal laws in the United States. (f.s. 847.001 Obscene Literature; Profanity).
- It is illegal to create harmful computer viruses. This violates the privacy of others.
- Do not create computer viruses that may harm a computer. Never transmit or publish any information or content that you think will be harmful. This violates school policy and also violates penal laws in the United States. (f.s. 815 Computer-Related Crimes).
- While MVHS works to ensure data privacy, ClassMail® must not always be considered private. Never say anything via ClassMail® that you wouldn't mind seeing on the school bulletin board or in the local newspaper.
- Protect your password. Keep it secret from anyone except your parents.
- Never publish any information, software, or content that violates the rights of others.
- Do not violate the terms and conditions of any web site you access.
- Never view files that were not intended for your use.
- **DO NOT** give out personal information to non-MVHS staff, for example:
 - a) Your full name
 - b) Home phone number
 - c) Home address
 - d) Email

Technical Requirements

The Minnesota Virtual High School ROADS learning management system is a fully Internet-based system which operates with a minimum of the following hardware and software requirements:

1. High-speed Internet connection (DSL or Cable recommended)
2. Operating System
3. Windows 2000 (XP or newer recommended) **or** Mac OS X and greater (Mac OS X 10.1 or newer recommended)
4. 500 MHz processor or greater
5. 256 MB of RAM (512 MB recommended)
6. 800 X 600 resolution (1024 X 768 recommended)
7. 16 bit audio adapter and speakers or headphones
8. Internet Browsers:
9. Internet Explorer 6.0 or greater **or** Mozilla Firefox Browser 1.2 and greater
10. Required Plug-ins:
11. Adobe Flash Player 9.0 on Internet Explorer, 8.0 on Mozilla Firefox
12. Adobe Shockwave Player
13. Adobe Acrobat Reader
14. Windows Media Player
15. Apple Quick Time Player
16. Possible Required System Modifications
17. Disabling of security firewall
18. Creating pass-through to *.advancedacademics.com for all filter and proxy servers
19. Disabling of pop-up blockers or adding the above domain to the allow list

Note: The ROADS system does not utilize local hard-disk storage, so you are free to access the system on any number of different computers including school or home.

*Please be aware that you may require the services of a network administrator who can configure firewall rules, install software, and address other technical issues. Our assessment will immediately identify most network issues.

As enhancements to the platform are incorporated, updated technical requirements will be made available to all MVHS participants.