



VIRGINIA

VIRTUAL ACADEMYSM



High School Handbook

Grades 9-12

School Year 2022-2023

Dear Students and Learning Coaches,

Thank you for selecting Virginia Virtual Academy (VAVA) as your high school of choice. The high school program of Virginia Virtual Academy is a tuition-free educational opportunity that has partnerships with local school districts. Our goals are to awaken the power of learning in every student through a personalized experience that offers engaging courses, caring teachers in a vibrant and diverse school community. We promise to provide a quality education that allows students to learn and achieve curricular goals at their own pace. VAVA teachers are experienced and passionate educators who are fully licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia in each of their subject assignments. Our school counselors and teachers are committed to supporting students using a variety of effective online instructional strategies. We strive to build partnerships with our students and their learning coaches so that students can set and achieve their goals. At Virginia Virtual Academy we pride ourselves on being both parent and student friendly. Our goals include maintaining a high level of student achievement, providing outstanding student support, and facilitating the successful transition for students to further their personal growth at any level of post-secondary education or choice of career. VAVA's mission is founded upon support for one another and respect for individual differences. Because we value diversity, we honor the unique qualities of each student in our school.

Together, as partners in education, we can achieve these goals for our students, your children.

We look forward to a great year at Virginia Virtual Academy!

Yours in Education,

Dr. Kenneth E. Moles, II

Virginia Virtual Academy, along with our school division partners, have set minimum enrollment criteria for our virtual education setting. It is our desire that all students are successful in this unique environment. Academic criteria are set for both initial enrollment and re-registration at Virginia Virtual Academy. Students who do not meet the academic criteria will not be invited to re-register for subsequent school years.

Criteria for Enrollment and Re-registration

Minimum GPA

High school applicants must have a minimum GPA of 3.0. In order to re-enroll, students must remain in good academic standing, successfully completing at least 5 units of credit, and passing a minimum of 3 core courses each year.

SOL scores

High school applicants must submit a Spring 2022 SOL score report indicating a scaled score of at least 375 for each subject area. Students are expected to make adequate progress toward verified credit requirements in order to re-register at VAVA each year.

Attendance

New applicants must submit a transcript indicating a 90% attendance rate with no more than 5 days absent (unexcused) in any given marking period. Current VAVA students who are not compliant in the areas of class connect attendance and the logging of hours may not be admitted the following year, and may even be administratively withdrawn during the current year.

Student Records

Official transcripts or home-school records showing all high school credit hours earned are required at the time of enrollment to ensure proper course placement. A record of all standardized test scores is also required.

Dual Enrollment with Another Public High School Not Permitted

VAVA partners with various local school districts to provide free, online public education. Our high school students are enrolled in a Virginia Public School, therefore, may not be enrolled in another public school at the same time. As a result, please note the following policies:

VAVA students **MAY NOT** take courses at another public school **DURING THE SCHOOL DAY** –even if the courses are taken not-for-credit.

VAVA students **MAY** participate in **AFTER SCHOOL** activities and clubs at their local public school.

VAVA students **MAY** be able to participate in **VHSL high school sports** at their local public school, **with the permission from the local school division superintendent**. See counselor for details.

VAVA students **MAY** participate in sports through **local recreational leagues** not affiliated with VHSL.

NCAA Approval Status

All VAVA courses are approved and accredited by the Virginia Department of Education, but the NCAA Clearinghouse does not approve most virtual education credits, including those earned at K12 schools. **If your student wants to pursue sports in college, VAVA is NOT the right fit at this time.** We are continually working toward gaining NCAA approval, but if your child is a college-bound athlete, we strongly encourage you to pursue other educational options for your child. The only K12 school currently approved by the NCAA is the K12 International Academy, which is a tuition-based school. K12 homeschool curriculum is also available. Please refer to the NCAA for homeschool requirements.

Student and Learning Coach Responsibilities

Student Expectations

Students are expected to attend all live Class Connect sessions for their courses. If a student misses a session due to an excused absence (medical, family commitment, etc.) they will be expected to watch the class recording prior to the next class connect session and complete assignments related to the missed session. Because there is a very broad window during which assignments may be submitted, only under very extenuating circumstances (including medical emergencies, etc.) are extensions granted. In these situations, students are expected to email teachers with a list of assignments for which they will need extensions.

Learning Coach Duties

The learning coach is responsible for logging student attendance each day and recording any days that the student takes off. These may include sick days and vacation days. It is important that students remain compliant by logging into the OMHS every day to log attendance hours or indicate an absence. Learning Coaches play a pivotal role in keeping the student accountable and ensuring they are keeping up with the pace of each course. We have found it is very difficult for students to catch up once they fall behind in a course. Please work with your child to set up a consistent routine to promote success in the on-line environment.

Student Support

Students who are struggling in multiple courses and/or not meeting attendance requirements will be referred to our school counselors for additional support. The counselors will work with the student to establish a "Back on Track plan." It is expected that both the student and learning coach work toward regaining compliance at Virginia Virtual Academy. Those families who continue to fail to meet minimum attendance requirements or who do not respond to ongoing communication with the school may be subject to withdrawal from the program.

Office Hours

Teachers are available throughout the week to assist students who have questions or need additional support. Check your course syllabus for your teacher's office hours and be sure to reach out for help as early as possible. If you fall behind in a course it is often difficult to catch up. Please be proactive in seeking help if you do not understand a concept being taught.

Academic Integrity (Cheating and Plagiarism)

All assignments are assumed to be the student's original work. Therefore, if the student utilizes any ideas that are not his or her original thoughts, the student must cite his or her sources using the format suggested by the teacher, who will provide further guidance. A student who fails to abide by these standards will be subject to disciplinary action. Summative assessments (Unit test, etc.) are expected to be completed in one sitting and within three hours unless your student has a documented plan requiring extra time or is otherwise indicated by the teacher.

Consequences: First offense – Homeroom teacher will be notified and student and learning coach will receive a written notification from the teacher explaining the offense. The student will be permitted to resubmit the assignment for a possible 80% of the original points.

Second offense – The student will not be allowed to resubmit the assignment, and will be given a 0.

Third offense – The student and learning coach will meet with the academic administrator to discuss further action

Student Academic Expectations

- Completing assignments daily
- Attending all CC sessions
- Responding to Emails from Teachers and Counselors
- Logging into the OMHS
- Logging Daily Attendance

Consequences of Failure to Meet Expectations

Week 1 – Student's Curriculum is locked

Week 2 – Second Contact- Email from Dr. Moles

Week 3 –Withdrawal Warning Letter

Week 4 –Notice of Withdrawal from VAVA; Family must seek alternate schooling option for student

Please note that to remain enrolled at VAVA, students must be in good standing overall.

Academic Calendar

August 11- Official Start Date (Orientation Courses Only Available)

August 15- Course Start Date (K-12)

September 5- Labor Day Holiday (No Class Connect Sessions)

October 14- End of First Quarter

November 11- Veteran's Day Holiday (No Class Connect Sessions)

November 23-25- Fall Break (No Class Connect Sessions)

December 16- End of Semester 1

December 19-January 3rd- Winter Break (No Class Connect Sessions)

January 16- Martin Luther King Holiday (No Class Connect Sessions)

February 20- President's Day Holiday (No Class Connect Sessions)

March 10- End of third Quarter

April 3-7- Spring Break (No Class Connect Sessions)

May 1- May 25- Spring SOL Testing

May 26- End of Semester 2

May 29- Memorial Day Holiday (No Class Connect Sessions)

Academic Policies

Minimum Number of Hours Logged and Supplemental Hours

Students are required to log 990 hours of attendance in the Online Middle and High School (OMHS) prior to the end of the school year to meet state requirements. Supplemental hours may include any activity that is educational in nature, but does not tie directly to the curriculum. **Students are permitted to log a maximum of 8 supplemental hours per week.** Some examples of supplemental activities include, but are not limited to: volunteer work, fine arts, leisure reading, participation in clubs, religious education, and educational family outings. These supplemental hours may be used to help the student reach the 990-hour requirement. Students who are taking less than 6 courses will be expected to log 150 hours per course to meet VAVA's attendance requirement (i.e. 600 hours for 4 courses). Supplemental hours may be used to help students reach the 150-hour per course requirement as well.

Add/Drop Period

Students may elect to add or drop a course from their schedule until **Tuesday, September 7th**. The add/drop period allows students to drop a course from his/her schedule without consequence if it is not a good fit. Students are encouraged to read the course syllabus carefully in order to understand expectations and course requirements. Students should make course changes as soon as possible so that they do not fall behind in any courses which are being added to the schedule. **Students who add a course to their schedule will be expected to make up any work they have missed.** Requests to add or drop a course should be submitted to your school counselor for approval and processing.

Grading Scale and GPA Calculation

We use a simple grading scale:

A (90%-100%) = 4.0 pts.

B (80%-89.9%)= 3.0 pts.

C (70%-79.9%)= 2.0 pts.

D (60%- 69.9%)= 1.0 pts.

F (Below 60%) = 0.0 pts.

**Grades of 89.5-89.9 will be rounded up to a 90%, 79.5-79.9 to a 80%, etc.*

Assign the appropriate point value for each course completed, add the values, then divide by the total number of courses you have taken. Note: the point value is the same whether it is a + or – grade. (B+ is 3.0 points, and B- is 3.0 points)

Students will be awarded credit for high school-level courses taken in middle school, however, courses taken prior to 9th grade will not be included in the calculation of student GPA.

AP Courses

Advanced Placement (AP) courses are rigorous, college-level courses that are available to students starting in 10th grade. Students may earn college credit for the courses based on their scores on the end-of-year AP exam. AP courses are awarded one extra quality point in the GPA calculation.(i.e. A= 5.0 points, B= 4.0 points, etc.) **Prerequisites are required for enrollment in AP courses. *In order to ensure all students, stay on track to graduate and academic success, you must maintain a "C" in AP course/s for Semester 1, or you will be moved to the regular level course for semester 2.* Please contact Ms. Brianna Keziah for any AP related questions (bkeziah@vavirtual.org).**

Honors Classes

Students who meet academic and attendance requirements in their core courses will be invited by their teachers to complete honors level courses, in the form of a honors contract. Honors courses are offered in mathematics courses up to Math Analysis, all English's, and all science courses up to Physics. Successful completion of the honors course will result in the "Honors" designation on the student report card and transcript (i.e. Honors Algebra 1 rather than Algebra 1). Students may choose to participate in some or all of the honors courses in which they are invited to participate. Participation is not required. Honors courses are not weighted. ***In order to ensure all students, stay on track to graduate and academic success, you must maintain a "C" in honors course/s for semester 1, or you will be moved to the regular level course for semester 2. At the end of Q1, students with a "D" or "F" in honors courses will meet with their grade level counselor and teacher to develop a Back on Track Plan.***

Repeating a Course/Grade Replacement

Students may repeat a course they have previously passed in attempt to earn a higher grade and improve their GPA. If the student earns a higher grade, the new grade will replace the old on the transcript. Students may only earn credit for a course once.

Multiple Quiz Attempts

Students in high school are expected to prepare for assessments and use only one attempt. A student may request a second attempt from the teacher. However, he/she may be expected to attend a teacher's office hours, or other criteria prior to the second attempt, if permitted by the teacher. If a third attempt is requested, the teacher must get administrative approval.

Dual Enrollment at Local Community Colleges and Four Year Colleges

VAVA students can take college courses at community colleges across the state of Virginia beginning in 11th grade. Contact your local community college to enroll. They will likely request that a high school official sign a form allowing you to take a college-level course or request a letter from the school. Please submit any requests for permission to enroll in a community college course to your school counselor. Please note, students will receive college credit for dual enrollment courses, but they will NOT receive high school credit for the class at this time.

Early Graduation Options

Our flexible schedule allows for many graduation tracks and plans. It is also possible to take just two or three courses junior and senior year, allowing for additional dual enrollment credits and/or part time work. Contact your assigned school counselor to discuss your goals and schedule options.

Summer School and Courses Taken Outside of VAVA

Students interested in taking courses over the summer for acceleration may select a school from the list of VDOE-approved online providers. Please reach out to your grade level counselor for the list of approved providers. Students will be awarded credit for any approved courses upon receipt of your transcript. These are private organizations, and they do charge tuition or fees for the classes. VAVA is not affiliated with these organizations and does not recommend one school over another.

Transcript Requests

Please send all requests for transcripts to Heather Walls at hwalls@vavirtual.org.

Letters of Recommendation

If you need a letter of recommendation from a school counselor please fill out the "Letter of Recommendation Request" form, found on Vavahs.com and email it to your counselor at least 2 weeks prior to the date you need the letter.

Diploma Types and Graduation Requirements

VAVA offers two diploma tracks: The state standard diploma track of 22 credit hours, and the advanced studies diploma track consisting of 26 credit hours. A verified credit is awarded to students who score 400 or higher on the end of course SOL exam in a given subject area. Please contact your assigned high school counselor to discuss which track might be best for you and your post-secondary goals. The charts on the following pages show the requirements for each diploma track.



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High School Graduation Requirements

All graduation requirements are aligned with Virginia Department of Education.

Standard Diploma

22 Credit hours, 5 verified credits*

Advanced Studies Diploma

26 Credit hours, 5 verified credits*

ENGLISH	4	ENGLISH	4
MATHEMATICS	3	MATHEMATICS	4
SCIENCE	3	SCIENCE	4
SOCIAL STUDIES	3	SOCIAL STUDIES	4
HEALTH AND PE	2	HEALTH AND PE	2
WORLD LANGUAGES, FINE ARTS or CTE	2	WORLD LANGUAGES**	3
<i>(select any 2 courses among the categories above)</i>	-	FINE ARTS or CTE	1
ECONOMICS AND PERSONAL FINANCE	1	ECONOMICS AND PERSONAL FINANCE	1
ELECTIVES***	4	ELECTIVES***	3
1 VIRTUAL COURSE REQUIRED (may be non-credit bearing)	✓	1 VIRTUAL COURSE REQUIRED (may be non-credit bearing)	✓
FIRST AID/CPR/AED CERTIFICATION REQUIRED	✓	FIRST AID/CPR/AED CERTIFICATION REQUIRED	✓
CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION CREDENTIAL or HONORS or AP COURSE REQUIRED	✓	CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION CREDENTIAL or HONORS or AP COURSE REQUIRED	✓

*A verified credit indicates a score of 400 or higher on the required VDOE end-of-course SOL test. Students must pass 2 English SOL's (reading and writing), 1 math SOL, 1 Science SOL, and 1 Social Studies SOL.

**The advanced studies diploma contains a requirement of either 3 years of 1 foreign language or 2 years of 2 languages.

***A minimum of 2 elective credits must be sequential electives (i.e. Spanish I, Spanish II or Sociology 1, Sociology 2).

Testing

SOL Testing

Students are given their end of course SOL tests in May at various testing locations throughout the state. Students are expected to attend their scheduled test at their assigned location, per the requirements of the Virginia Department of Education. Families will be notified well in advance what the testing schedule is. Students who achieve a scaled score of 400 or above will earn a verified credit in the course. Students who score between 375-400 will be given an opportunity to retake the test in an attempt to pass within 1-2 weeks of taking the initial tests. Teachers will be available for remediation prior to the retake. Please see graduation requirements for more information on the number of verified credits needed in each subject area to meet the diploma requirements. Once the verified credit requirement has been met in a given subject area, the student will not have to sit for additional exams in that subject.

Courses with SOL Exams:

Earth Science	Algebra 1	World History 2	English 11 Writing
Biology	Geometry	World Geography	English 11 Reading
Chemistry	Algebra 2	US History	

PSAT10—Sophomore Year

We highly recommend that our 10th grade students begin practicing for the SAT and the PSAT/NMSQT (National Merit Scholar Qualifying Test) which are taken in 11th grade.

Two options for practice are available:

- 1) Khan Academy has partnered with CollegeBoard to offer 8 full-length practice SAT exams which can be taken online for free. Visit www.khanacademy.org/sat
- 2) Register to take the PSAT/NMSQT at a local brick and mortar school of your choice. If you are struggling to find a site that will allow you to test, please contact Ms. Keziah immediately. Please note the PSAT is generally offered in early October. Plan ahead! Do not miss the registration deadline.

PSAT/NMSQT—Junior Year

The PSAT/NMSQT is used by scholarship programs (including the National Merit Scholarship Program) to look for eligible students. While some brick and mortar schools allow students to take this test during their sophomore year, we recommend that students take it in October of their Junior year. This timeline allows the student to complete one extra year of math and English coursework, which we believe will help them to score higher on the exam. Contact your local brick and mortar school to register for the test and take it at their facility. If you are having an issue with test registration at your local brick and mortar please contact Ms. Keziah.

The CollegeBoard code for VAVA is 470072. This code should be used when registering for PSAT/NMSQT, SAT, AP and ACT.

SAT and ACT- Junior Year

Our recommendation is that our college-bound students take BOTH the SAT and ACT in the fall or winter of their Junior year to see which test they prefer. These tests can be taken at the student's local brick and mortar school or testing facility. Dates and testing locations can be found at www.CollegeBoard.org and www.act.org. Once the student determines which test they prefer, they will retake the test at the end of the Junior year in an attempt to improve their score. If necessary, the exam can be taken one more time at the start of the Senior year to achieve a desired score.

ASVAB Test

Students who wish to join the military should schedule to take the ASVAB test prior to the end of their junior year. They will need to contact a local military recruiter to register. This test serves as both an entrance exam and career exploration tool. Be sure to tell your guidance counselor if you plan to pursue a career in the military.

AP Exams

Students enrolled in AP courses at VAVA are eligible to take the AP exam at the end of the course. Student who score high enough on the exam may earn college credit for the course. AP tests will be taken locally at a school near the student's home. It is important that you start making arrangements early in the fall to secure a testing site near you. Please contact our AP Coordinator, Ms. Keziah, if you need assistance finding a testing site for your exam. Additional information about AP exam registration will be sent to students taking AP courses in the fall.

CTE Credentialing Exam

The WISE Financial Literacy exam is a proctored exam given to students in the Economics and Personal Finance course during their junior or senior year. This exam must be taken off-site in the Spring, similar to the SOL exams. Students must pass the exam with a score of 70% or higher in order to earn a CTE Credential. Up to 3 attempts may be given.

CPR Demonstration Requirement

The state of Virginia requires requires students to be trained in Emergency First Aid, CPR, and AED. This training is built into our health curriculum; however a practical skills demonstration must be conducted to meet the graduation requirement as well. We will provide several opportunities for students to demonstrate their skills to a certified instructor at various testing sites throughout the state, free of charge. Students may also opt to participate in training through the American Red Cross, American Heart Association, or another recognized organization in your local area. Students must do both the classroom and hands-on portion of the course. If you obtain certification through Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts, a Life Guarding course, or another avenue, you are welcome to email a copy of your certification to your high school counselor or PE teacher for credit.