



Hamilton County Virtual School

Parent/Student Handbook

2020-2021

Welcome!

Welcome to a whole new world of virtual learning for you and your student. Hamilton County Schools has embarked on a bold learning venture to accommodate families wishing to learn from home during this unique time. With a worldwide pandemic and many hardships and obstacles families face, pandemic related or otherwise, continuing your student's education is our number one priority.

Many learners found during our HCS Spring semester at home that they had better results learning at their own pace with help from teachers online and adults in the home. HCVS is designed to be schooling in the safety of your own space and at your own pace. Please let teachers, counselors, or me know how we can help you and your child.

Kelly Coffelt
Principal
423-498-6750
COFFELT_KELLY@HCDE.ORG

Asynchronous Learning

HCVS is an asynchronous learning choice. The teachers, students and other participants are not expected to be online and interacting at the same time. The real-time interaction of homeroom/advisory, coaching and Enrichment activities are all optional and do not affect the student’s grade if he/she does not join. Adults as Learning Coach

In the K–8 environment, the parent or other home adult acts as a **Learning Coach** who facilitates progress through daily lessons. Suggested weekly lesson plans are provided, which are updated by HCVS teachers. The lesson plans can be varied to accommodate the child's pace or abilities.

In the high school program, the **Learning Coach** still plays an important supportive role to help the student stay on task and ensure follow-through on his or her assignments. During high school, though, the student is expected to start managing his or her own time and academic schedule more directly.

Hamilton County Virtual School is the closest to a home-schooling option as a public school can offer. Below is a guide to what a learning coach can expect to spend per day with an average of 4-6 hours of student learning (following recommended pacing). Of course, the amount of time depends on the individual student as well.

Grades K-5	4-6 hours
Grades 7-12	1-3 hours

Attendance

A student’s attendance may be counted by logging into the learning management system, Classlinks. In HCVS, students must log in five days out of seven. Students that fail to log in are marked absent unless there is an excused and documented reason. Verification of excused absences should be submitted to a teacher and administrator.

The list of absent or unaccounted for students will be reviewed weekly by the student support team (teachers, counselor, administrator) to determine trends, strategize interventions, etc.

HCVS Students that are logged in five (of the seven) days are counted present; students not logged in are marked absent unless there is a justifiable and

documented reason. Verification of excused absences should be submitted to school designated personnel.

The HCVS Attendance week is Sunday-Saturday. Teachers enter any absences (fewer than 5 log-ins) each Monday school is in session. These are reflected in PowerSchool, our Student Information System, for all students.

By law students must attend school regularly. District personnel will intervene to address habitual truancy using a Tiered Attendance Intervention support structure for students and their families. School Board Policy 6.200. The district is also providing additional guidance for attendance procedures as part of our Reentry & Continuous Learning Plan for the 2020-2021 school year. This guidance will primarily address students who are following the HCS Learning Continuum for in person learning; however, the requirements for attendance when completing remote (distance) learning activities will also be applicable to HC Virtual School students. HCVS will follow the regular district calendar. [LINK to 20-21 calendar](#)

Grading

It is important to note that *ALL grades in HCVS are progress grades* up until the final grade of the year. Using an online curriculum that is self-paced means that the student's work determines where he/she is at any point in the year. Grades can always be improved until the final report card.

K-2

Students in grades kindergarten through second grade have standards-based report cards as required by HCS. Virtual teachers will do their best to assess the current quarter's standards based on the student work in Savvas. This may require meeting by zoom to assess in real-time. The end of year report card will determine a student's readiness for the next grade level. As in any school, final decisions for promotion are determined by the principal.

3-5

Quarterly progress grades will be posted in PowerSchool by the report card due date published by HCS. In grades 3-5, these grades are determined by completion of graded activities and quizzes in Savvas. The end of year report card will determine a student's readiness for the next grade level. As in any school, final decisions for promotion are determined by the principal.

6-12

Quarterly progress grades will be posted in PowerSchool on the report card due date published by HCS. In grades 6-12, these grades are determined by quiz completion and grades in Edgenuity. Only by progressing through activities and scoring passing grades on quizzes, will a student pass the course for the year. The end of year report card will determine a student's readiness for the next grade level. As in any school, final decisions for promotion are determined by the principal.

Canvas - Students in grades 6-12 will receive an invitation to join their teacher's Canvas Course. This is an online location for communication only; it does not contain coursework. Teachers may post supporting resources as well as zoom links, remind links, and extra credit (see below).

Enrichment Activities - also known as Extra Credit - will be offered in each teacher's Canvas course. These activities are available for students as an "extra" outside of the coursework in Edgenuity. It is an opportunity to work outside the platform and to earn additional points toward the student's final grade. Credit will be awarded in PowerSchool on the final report card.

Responsible Use of School Loaned Devices

All parents agreed to the [HCS Responsible Use Policy](#) upon registering his or her student for this school year.

All HCS devices are monitored by the Bark system. This system alerts the administration of any inappropriate or alarming online behavior. Some of the areas flagged are: language, bullying, harassment, depression, suicide, sexual content.

If a student device has an alert, an administrator or counselor will immediately notify the parent. Repeated alerts may result in the student losing HCS device access. If warranted, disciplinary action may be taken, including involving law enforcement.

Appropriate Attire

Students joining in live sessions or using video will arrive dressed for the camera. They will be required to wear appropriate attire for live sessions. Hats or hoods may not be worn if they cover the face or cause the student to not be identified. A student shall not dress, groom, wear or use emblems, insignias, badges, gang

symbols or other symbols where the effect thereof is to distract unreasonably the attention of other students or otherwise to cause disruption or interference with the operation of the school. The principal or other duly authorized school official shall determine whether any particular mode of dress, apparel, grooming or use of emblems, insignias, badges or other symbols results in the interference or disruption, as to violate this rule and shall give notice of such interference or disruption, and its cause. The Dress Policy must accommodate students whose religious beliefs may be substantially burdened by this policy.

Exceptional Education & English Language Learners Services

Students receiving services through Exceptional Education and/or the English Language Learners Program will still receive their required services through HCVS. Families selecting HC Virtual School with children who receive Exceptional Education services will be invited to an IEP meeting with their case manager to update the plan to reflect the Virtual School selection. English learners will also be scheduled to meet their required service hours for language support via a remote learning structure. Families can also reference the [Supporting Students with Disabilities During COVID-19: Resources for Tennessee Families](#) website for additional guidance from the State of Tennessee on supporting children with disabilities. In addition, HCS has compiled a Q&A regarding remote learning and exceptional education services that can be found [here](#).

Teacher Availability

HCVS teachers will create flexible schedules to meet the needs of learners as much as possible. Every class will offer Coaching support daily that can be joined by a student/learning coach. Optional Advisory (6-12) and Homeroom (K-5) will be scheduled at least weekly.

Teachers will post electronic communication information. The teacher contact list is also on the website [here](#).

[A sample teacher schedule can be found here.](#)

Social & Emotional Supports

Students will have a designated homeroom (K-5) or advisory (6-12) teacher that offers a check-in with the student and their well-being (beyond academics) at least once a week. School counselors will provide office hours to meet with HCVS students. In addition, if a student needs more intensive support, such as those provided by school social workers or attendance specialists, etc. those services will be assigned and accessible via HCVS.

Harassment & Bullying

It shall be a violation of board policy for any student to bully or haze another student whether directly, through a third party, or through the use of electronic devices such as text messages or posts on social media sites. As defined in board policy, bullying includes any act that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities or performance. If the act occurs on school grounds, on a school sponsored activity, on school sponsored transportation or at a school designated bus stop, it is bullying if it has the effect of harming a student or damaging his or her property; knowingly placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student or to his or her property; causing emotional distress to the student; or creating a hostile educational environment. If the act occurs off school property or outside of any school sponsored activity, it is nevertheless bullying if it is directed at a specific student or students and has the effect of creating a hostile educational environment or a substantial disruption to the educational environment or the learning process. Cyber-bullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, and tablets, as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites. Examples may include inappropriate text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social network sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles. Hazing is any act intended or reasonably expected to endanger the physical or mental health of a student or students, or to humiliate, intimidate or demean a student or students in connection with joining or maintaining membership in any team or organization affiliated with any school or school program.

School Board Policy 6.304

Claims of bullying/harassment/cyberbullying/hazing are to be directed to the building administrator for investigation without the fear of reprisal or retaliation. False accusations as a means of reprisal or retaliation will be disciplined in accordance with the district policies, procedures, and agreements. HCS will host annual events for parents to discuss prevention strategies. Dates, times, and locations will be forwarded through the HCS messaging system.

NOTE: This Code of Acceptable Behavior will be implemented in compliance with the requirements of applicable federal and state statutes and accompanying regulations governing the appropriate discipline of students suspected or identified as having a disability. It is the policy of Hamilton County Board of Education not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, national origin, creed, religion, age, marital status, or disability in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies.

A complaint may be filed by anyone who has a grievance regarding discrimination as set forth in one of the following statutes: 1. The Rehabilitation Act of 1972, Section 504; 2. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; or 3. Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972.

When Issues Arise

If you or your child encounters a specific problem or concern during the school year, the following step(s) should be taken:

1. Contact your child's teacher to schedule a conference.
2. If the issue was not resolved in Step 1, call or make an appointment with the principal, Kelly Coffelt. Coffelt_kelly@hcde.org or 489-6750.
3. If the issue was not resolved in Step 2, call or make an appointment with Chief of Innovation and Choice: Jill Levine (423-498-7172)
4. After talking with the Chief of Innovation and Choice, if you feel you need further assistance, contact the Chief of Schools.

Discrimination Complaints

Discrimination complaints will be forwarded to the Equity Office to the attention of one of the following:

Dr. Marsha Drake - Race, Ethnicity, Limited English Proficiency, Religion, Etc. (Title VI)
423-498-7022

Karen S. Glenn - Sex, Gender-based, Gender Identity, Etc. (Title IX) 423-498-7221

Gloria Moore - Disability (504) 423-498-7082

Additional Contacts

Chief of Schools: **Dr. Neelie Parker** (423-498-7111)

Interim Exceptional Education Director: **Mitzi Delker** (423-498-7113)

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Director: **Diego Trujillo** (423-498-7132)