TRIO Wolf Creek Distance Learning Charter School #4095

624 ONLINE LEARNING OPTIONS

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to recognize and govern online learning options of students enrolled in the charter school for purposes of compulsory attendance and address enrollment of students with an online learning provider for supplemental or full time online learning.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

TRIO Wolf Creek Distance Learning Charter #4095 is a tuition free online charter school serving students in grades 9-12. It is web-based learning designed to meet the educational needs of full-time TRIO Wolf Creek Distance Learning students and other supplemental Minnesota students. The charter school is also eligible to charge tuition to students in need of over-enrolling at a tuition cost.

A Minnesota licensed teacher works in partnership with students and their families to develop and individualize graduation plans. Learning goals are aligned with state and charter school requirements, as well as curriculum outcomes. Online courses offer the same rigorous academic standards that a student would receive at a traditional high school.

A. The charter school shall not prohibit an enrolled student from applying to enroll in online learning.

B. The charter school shall grant academic credit for completing the requirements of an online learning course or program.

C. The charter school shall allow an online learning student to have the same access to the computer hardware and education software available in the school as all other students in the school. An online learning provider must assist an online learning student whose family qualifies for education tax credit to acquire computer hardware and educational software for online learning purposes.

D. The charter school shall continue to provide non-academic services to online learning students when needed.

E. Online learning students may participate in the extracurricular activities of the charter school on the same basis as other enrolled students if applicable.

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III. DEFINITIONS

A. "Blended Learning" is a form of digital learning that occurs when a student learns part time in a supervised physical setting and part time through digital delivery of instruction, or a student learns in a supervised physical setting where technology is used as a primary method to delivery instruction. "Online learning" is an interactive course or program that delivers instruction from a teacher to a student by computer; is combined with other traditional delivery methods that include frequent student assessment and may include actual teacher contact time; and meets or exceeds state academic standards.

B. "Digital Learning" is learning facilitated by technology that offers students an element of control over their time, place, path, or pace of their learning and includes blended and online learning. "Online learning provider" is a charter school, an intermediate school district, an organization of two or more school districts operating under a joint powers agreement, or a charter school located in Minnesota that provides online learning to students.

C. "Enrolling District" means the school district or charter school in which a student is enrolled under Minn. Stat. § 120A.22, Subd. 4, for purposes of compulsory education. "Student" is a Minnesota resident enrolled in a school under Minn. Stat. § 120A.22, Subd. 4, in kindergarten through grade 12.

D. "Full-time online learning provider" means an enrolling school authorized by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to deliver comprehensive public education at any or all of the elementary, middle, or high school levels.

E. "Online learning course syllabus" is a written document that an online learning provider transmits to the enrolling charter school using a format prescribed by the Commissioner of MDE to identify the state academic standards embedded in an online learning course, the course content outline, required course assessments, expectations for actual teacher contact time, and other student-to-teacher communications, and the academic support available to the online learning student. "Enrolling district" means the school district or charter school in which a student is enrolled under Minn. Stat. § 120A.22, Subd. 4, for purposes of compulsory attendance.

F. "Online learning" is a form of digital learning delivered by an approved online learning provider under Paragraph III.H. "Supplemental online learning" means an online course taken in place of a course period during the regular school day at a local district school or charter school.

G. "Online learning student" is a student enrolled in an online learning course or program delivered by an authorized online learning provider. "Full-time online provider" means an enrolling school authorized by the department to deliver comprehensive public education at any or all of the elementary, middle, or high school levels.

H. "Online learning provider" is a school district, an intermediate school district, or an organization of two or more school districts operating under a joint powers agreement, or a charter school located in Minnesota that provides online learning to students and is approved by MDE to provide online learning courses. "Online course syllabus" is a written document that an online learning provider transmits to the enrolling district using a format prescribed by the commissioner to identify the state academic standards embedded in an online course, the course content outline, required course assessments, expectations for actual teacher contact time and other student-to-teacher communications, and the academic support available to the online learning student.

As of 2009, both full-time and supplemental online learning providers are subject to the reporting requirements and review criteria under subdivision 7.

I. "Student" is a Minnesota resident enrolled in a public school, a nonpublic school, church or religious organization, or home school in which a child is provided instruction in compliance with Minn. Stat. §§ 120A.22 and 120A.24.

J. "Supplemental online learning" means an online learning course taken in place of a course period at a local district school or charter school.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Dissemination and Receipt of Information

1. The charter school shall make available information about online learning to all interested people. The charter school may utilize the list of approved online learning providers and online learning courses and programs developed, published, and maintained by the Minnesota Department of Education.

2. The charter school will receive and maintain information provided to it by other online learning providers.

3. The online provider must report or make available information on an individual student's progress and accumulated credit to the student, the student's parent, and the enrolling district in a manner specified by the

Commissioner unless the enrolling district and the online provider agree to a different form of notice and notify the Commissioner.

4. The enrolling district must designate a contact person to help facilitate and monitor the student's academic progress and accumulated credits towards graduation.

B. Students and Enrollment

1. A student may apply for full-time enrollment in an approved online learning program or for supplemental online learning. The student must have the written consent of a parent or guardian to do so if the student is under eighteen (18) years of age.

2. The student and the student's parents must submit an application to the online learning provider and identify the student's reason for enrolling in online learning. The online learning provider that accepts a student under this section must within ten days notify the student and the school in writing if the school is not the online learning provider. The student and family must notify the online learning provider of their intent to enroll in online learning within ten days of acceptance, at which time the student and parent must sign a statement of assurance that they have reviewed the online course or program and understand the expectations of online learning enrollment. The online learning provider must notify the school of the student's enrollment in online learning in writing on a form provided by MDE.

3. An online learning provider must make available the supplemental online course syllabus to the enrolling district. Within 15 days after the online learning provider makes information in this paragraph available to the enrolling district, the enrolling district must notify the online provider whether the student, the student's parent, and the enrolling district agree or disagree that the course meets the enrolling district's graduation requirements.

   If the enrolling district does not agree that the course or program meets its graduation requirements, then:

   (1) The enrolling district must make available an explanation of its decision to the student, the student's parent, and the online provider; and

   (2) The online provider may make available a response to the enrolling district, showing how the course or program meets the graduation requirements of the enrolling district.

4. The supplemental online learning notice to the enrolling district when a student applies to the online learning provider will include the courses or program, credits to be awarded, and the start date of the online learning course or program. An online learning provider must make available the supplemental online learning course syllabus to the enrolling district. Within 15 days after the online learning provider makes information in this paragraph available to the enrolling district, the enrolling district must notify the online learning provider whether the student, the student's parent, and the enrolling district agree or disagree that the course meets the enrolling district's graduation requirements. A student may enroll in a supplemental online learning course up to the midpoint of the school district's term. The school district may waive this requirement for special circumstances with the agreement of the online learning provider.

5. An online learning student may enroll in supplemental online learning courses during a single school year to a maximum of 50 percent of the student's full schedule of courses per term. A student may exceed the supplemental online learning registration limit if the school grants permission for supplemental online learning enrollment above the limit, or if an agreement is made between the school and the online learning provider for instructional services. To enroll in more than 50 percent of the student's full schedule or courses per term in online learning, the student must qualify to exceed the supplemental online learning registration limit or apply for enrollment to an approved full-time online learning program following appropriate procedures in Paragraph IV.B.2. above. Full-time online learning students may enroll in classes at a local school under a contract for instructional services between the online learning provider and the school district.

6. Full-time online learning students may enroll in classes at a local school per contract for instructional services between the online learning provider and the school.

7. An online learning student may complete course work at a grade level that is different from the student's current grade level.

8. An online learning student may enroll in additional courses with the online learning provider under a separate agreement that includes terms for payment of any tuition or course fees.

C. Classroom Membership and Teacher Contact Time

1. The enrolling district school may reduce an online learning student's regular classroom instructional membership in proportion to the student's membership in online learning courses.

2. The school may reduce the course schedule of an online learning student in proportion to the number of online learning courses the student takes from an online learning provider other than the school.

3. A teacher with a Minnesota license must assemble and deliver instruction to enrolled students receiving online learning from an enrolling district. The delivery of instruction occurs when the student interacts with the computer or the teacher and receives ongoing assistance and assessment of learning. The instruction may include curriculum developed by persons other than a teacher with a Minnesota license.

4. The online provider, other than a digital learning provider offering digital learning to its enrolled students only under Minn. Stat. § 124D.095, Subd. 4(d), must give the commissioner written assurance that: (1) all courses meet state academic standards; and (2) the online learning curriculum, instruction, and assessment, expectations for actual teacher-contact time or other student-to-teacher communication, and academic support meet nationally recognized professional standards and are described as such in an online course syllabus that meets the commissioner's requirements.

D. Academic Credit; Graduation Standards or Requirements

1. The charter school shall apply the same graduation requirements to all students whether they enroll in fully online courses or use supplementary services.

2. The charter school shall use the same criteria for accepting online learning credits or courses as it does for accepting credits or courses for nonresident transfer students under Minnesota law.

3. Any school may challenge the validity of a course offered by an online learning provider. Such a challenge will be filed with the Minnesota Department of Education.

4. An online learning provider must make available to the school district the course syllabus, standard alignment, content outline, assessment requirements, and contact information for supplemental online courses taken by school students. The syllabus will be in the form prescribed by the

commissioner and described in Minn. Stat. § 124D.095 Subd. 2(j) and Subd. 7.

5. The school shall count secondary credits granted to an online learning student toward its graduation and credit requirements.

6. If a student completes an online learning course or program that meets or exceeds a graduation standard or grade progression requirement at the charter school, that standard or requirement will be met.

7. Weighted grades will also be applicable if the school district has adopted a policy to offer weighted grades.

E. Enrollment

1. As a charter school entity TRIO Wolf Creek Distance Learning Charter School will attempt to accept enrollment based on 85% comprehensive students and 15% supplemental students (Supplemental services), unless different, as needed, per administrative directive. As a charter school, TRIO Wolf Creek Distance Learning Charter School may close for enrollment when the student numbers warrant closure. A lottery will be held each spring if necessary for enrollment purposes. Priority enrollment will be given to students enrolled the previous year at the charter school and siblings of students enrolled the previous year at the charter school. After that lottery or enrollment period, students will be accepted on a first come-first serve basis. When necessary, a waiting list will be created based on these same principles. The TRIO Wolf Creek Distance Learning Charter School will accept students until enrollment is full based on predetermined student numbers and staffing capacities.

2. Learning Managers will not instruct more than 40 students in any one online learning course or program.

3. All procedures for closing will be reviewed with the Charter School specialist and Online Learning Specialist at MDE as needed.

4. Once enrollment is closed, students will be accepted on the following basis; 85% comprehensive students and 15% supplemental students, unless different, as needed, per administrative director, or unless otherwise noted in the board minutes for a specific amount of time. In addition, specific grade levels from 9-12 may be closed due to over population throughout the school year based on enrollment numbers and staff advising specific grade areas. When a grade is closed for enrollment, students will be issued provisional acceptance status until such time as grade level information is

obtained based on a credit check and academic credits achieved using Wolf Creek procedures.

5. A student enrolled using the supplemental services option must continue their enrollment for one full quarter prior to being eligible for a change to fulltime comprehensive student status the following quarter, if a waiting list is in effect. If a student requests such a change in writing after one full quarter they will be placed at the top position available on the waiting list and will only be accepted for full time status if a place for that full time status is available.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 120A.22 (Compulsory Instruction)
Minn. Stat. § 120A.24 (Reporting)
Minn. Stat. § 123B.42, Subd. 1a (Curriculum; Electronic Components)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.03 (Enrollment Options Program)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.09 (Post-Secondary Enrollment Options Act)
Minn. Stat. § 124D.095 (On-Line Learning Option Act)

Cross References: Policy 509 (Enrollment of Nonresident Students)
MSBA Policy 605 (Alternative Programs)
Policy 608 (Instructional Services – Special Education)
Policy 613 (Graduation Requirements)
Policy 620 (Credit for Learning)