

**Estill County Schools**  
**Virtual Learning Academies**  
**Appendix A**  
**Plan Narrative**

**Enrollment**

Only students whose families have requested to be enrolled in virtual academies are eligible to participate in virtual learning. No student will be placed involuntarily in the virtual school solely due to disciplinary reasons. The Admissions and Release Committee (ARC) of any student with an Individual Education Program (IEP) pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) shall document the students enrollment in the virtual school in the ARC Conference Summary.

All students shall be full-time enrolled in virtual school. Only students with pre-determined appropriate digital access and support beyond the school campus shall be candidates for enrollment in the virtual school and determination of candidacy. The district shall ensure all students enrolled in virtual school have appropriate digital access to fully participate in and access virtual learning.

The district shall fully comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Act Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and applicable laws and regulations for the education of students with disabilities. The District shall fully implement accommodations and IEP for students with disabilities enrolled in virtual school. Section 504 Teams and Admissions and Release Committees (ARC) are involved in determining how all special education, related services, and accommodations will be implemented for students with disabilities in the virtual setting and to make sure all services can be provided virtually.

The district shall document all students, who are 100% virtual, as “non-transported” for transportation funding purposes.

Students, who reside outside of Estill County, may do so if the district in which they reside has a reciprocal agreement with the district.

Families of homeschooled students (grades 6-12) may utilize the district’s virtual learning platforms for a fee of \$500 per year. Payable in two installments at the beginning of each semester.

Students who participate in a virtual academy will not be able to participate in extracurricular activities, including but not limited to, athletics, band, clubs, prom, etc.

Participation in the graduation ceremony is an earned privilege. Students must be in good academic and behavioral standing and have fulfilled all Estill County Schools and state of Kentucky graduation requirements. Students must be enrolled and attending school through Estill County Schools. Home school students are not eligible to walk across the stage. Eligible students must attend graduation practices in order to walk across the stage.

### **Application**

Parents requesting their student(s) be enrolled in virtual learning, shall complete an application. As a part of the application process, students will complete a digital questionnaire to determine their ability to navigate in a virtual environment. Parents will agree to certain requirements such as participating in state and local assessments and maintaining a pace of learning which is appropriate for the student's academic level.

Parents and students will meet with the school principal, teacher facilitator, and school counselor, for a one-on-one meeting/interview to review the application and other information regarding virtual learning. A determination regarding enrollment will be determined after this meeting.

### **Orientation**

Upon approval to attend virtual academy, all parents and students will attend a required orientation meeting at the beginning of the year to learn more about expectations, timelines, and other requirements.

Students who do not comply with the following expectations will be deemed ineligible to attend virtual academy and will be switched to "in-person" learning at the end of the grading cycle (9 weeks):

1. Comply with all compulsory attendance requirements.
2. Participate in a Google Meet with Teacher Facilitator at the start of the school day and mid-point during the day (three hours later).
3. Students with IEPs shall participate in Google Meets or "in-person" targeted instruction with therapists and special education teachers as outlined in their IEPs.
4. Maintain a work ethic based on teacher expectations for the course, equivalent to students in the regular classroom setting.
5. Completion of tasks on a timely basis, in correlation with due dates of assignments.
6. Attend an orientation meeting at the beginning of each school year.

7. Have parent support at home to monitor student progress and grades.
8. Have digital access at home at all times.
9. Attend “in-person” sessions to take district and state assessments.

### **Attendance**

K-5 student attendance shall be tracked by a certified teacher. Teachers will track attendance twice a day, once at the beginning of the day, and once at mid-point of the day (three hours apart). Student attendance, grades 6-12, shall be tracked by a certified teacher for each course/period.

District attendance clerks at each school will reconcile attendance for each course/period to ensure proper codes are entered for absent students. District clerks assigned to schools will enter doctor and parent notes.

All district attendance policies and truancy laws shall be followed for virtual academy students. Board policy shall address internet outages and other acts of God, which are out of control of parents or students.

### **Curriculum**

K-12 teachers shall utilize district curriculum documents which are based on grade-level expectations established in the KY Academic Standards (KAS). These curriculum documents are vetted by teachers on a regular basis through the district PLC protocol at each grade level or content. Throughout this process, PLCs review and approve high level instructional resources which are aligned with KAS. The district utilizes a continuous improvement process to ensure curriculum documents are revised and updated in this on-going process.

A district committee was established to explore and identify virtual learning platforms which were aligned to the expectations established in the KY Academic Standards (KAS). After reviewing various platforms, the Committee chose APEX Learning for grades 6-12 and PEARSON Learning for grades K-5, which have a rigorous digital curriculum, technology that enables access for all students, an implementation plan that provides professional learning and support for educators, and ongoing evaluation against program goals. The district utilizes a continuous improvement process to ensure digital curriculum is reviewed each year to ensure students in the virtual academy receive the same curriculum expectations as established by KAS as those students who are “in-person”.

## **Teaching and Learning**

The virtual academy shall implement synchronous strategies utilizing Google Meet for grades K-12 for support and to provide instruction aligned to grade-level expectations established in the KY Academic Standards. This digital platform will provide for two-way student to teacher visual and verbal interaction. This will occur during the school day with teachers having dedicated time for virtual students or after school hours. Teachers will be compensated for their time if they work outside of their regular school hours.

Students in grades K-5 will be assigned a certified K-5 teacher. Students in grades 6-12, will be assigned a certified teacher for each content area based on the student's schedule. Students with IEPs will be assigned a certified special education teacher.

Instruction will be aligned to the grade level expectations established in the Kentucky Academic Standards, including the selection, vetting, and usage of high-quality instructional resources aligned to KAS and grade-level appropriate work. The superintendent will assure the Kentucky Digital Learning Guidelines are being followed and implemented annually.

## **Digital Platforms**

### **PEARSON Learning**

K-5 students will utilize PEARSON CONNEXUS. Teachers will follow the same instructional scope and sequence as those students who are in the regular classroom setting. Students with IEPs will receive accommodations and modifications as documented in their IEPs. Students will be assigned a schedule that aligns with the standard day of those who are "in-person" students. Students shall adhere to the standard day and hour requirements set forth at KRS158.070. When students need a quick answer, LiveTutor is there to help. Students can connect with a live online teacher for help with specific problems or further explanation of a concept. Tutors are available in elementary and secondary courses for English/reading/language arts, math, science, and social studies. Students will complete formative and summative assessments throughout the learning process. These assessments will be utilized to measure student progress on grade-level standards and to support students who need accelerated learning on grade-level standards within Tier 1 instruction. Assessments will also be utilized to determine students who need more targeted instruction and support for tiers 2 & 3. Tiers 2 & 3 instruction will be provided utilizing Google Meets with the teacher according to student needs. Teachers will be responsible for reporting student progress which will include grades, adequate pace, and participation in Google Meets on Infinite Campus.

### **APEX Learning**

Students in grades 6-12 will utilize the APEX Learning platform. APEX provides personalized learning that has the potential to accelerate and deepen learning for students. This instructional approach guides students toward knowledge and mastery on their own learning paths. Students shall adhere to the standard day and hour requirements set forth at KRS158.070. The teacher facilitator will monitor assignments that will mirror the instruction taking place in the regular classroom. Students with IEPs will receive accommodations and modifications as documented in their IEPs. Students will complete formative and summative assessments on APEX Learning. These assessments will be utilized to measure student progress on content standards and to support students who need accelerated learning within Tier 1 instruction. Assessments will also be utilized to determine students who need more targeted instruction and support for tiers 2 & 3. Tiers 2 & 3 instruction will be provided utilizing Google Meets with the teacher according to student needs.

### **Assessments**

Virtual academy students will be assessed utilizing formative and summative assessments to inform instruction and to meet students' needs. In grades K-5, PEARSON Learning assessments will be utilized. For grades 6-12, APEX Learning assessments will be utilized. These assessments will be administered virtually.

All virtual academy students shall be required to attend "in-person" sessions at their school, to complete required state and district assessments, including but not limited to (K-Prep, ACT, MAP, F&P, CERT, Industry Certification, etc.).

### **Progress Reports**

Teacher Facilitators will report progress for virtual academy students every two weeks. This report will include attendance, targeted work completion, grades and other information that would be important for parents/students.

In grades 3-12, a teacher will load grades on Infinite Campus. Parents can access the parent portal at any time to monitor grades. Report cards will be mailed to parents at the same time the school of record reports progress.

In grades K-2, teachers will provide specific feedback on daily work assignments and will report progress by grade level mastery of KAS expectation of standards every two weeks. Report cards will be mailed to parents at the same time the school of record reports progress.

### **Professional Learning**

The district will provide professional development for teachers and administrators, on high quality instructional resources, and on evidence-based instructional practices for virtual learning. Job embedded professional development will occur during PLCs and after school. Opportunities for teachers to obtain Google Educator Level 1 & 2 certifications are encouraged each year.

Virtual academy teachers (regular and SED) will participate in professional development surrounding regulations and strategies to meet diverse learning needs in a virtual setting.

Professional development for APEX and PERARON will be provided to district and school administration as well as classroom teachers for the effective implementation of the program. Professional development will be designed around the goals of the program as well as the experience of educators.

Professional development for digital learning is an ongoing process. Educators are continuously learning new ways to deliver instruction and sharing those experiences with their colleagues. This is evidenced by student work, walkthroughs, and digital teacher observations.

Digital Learning Coaches will work closely with the DTC/CIO and the Principal to implement and help share the vision of how technology will be implemented in the classroom. They will assist teachers in maximizing the effective use of technology for learning, differentiating instruction, and providing rigorous, relevant, and engaging learning experiences for all students. DLCs will provide vital real time professional learning for all schools by sharing customized digital learning strategies tied to structured learning experience design, digital workflow, digital relationship, digital collaboration and student-design digital products. All of which are tied to remote and distance learning. DLC's will look for the latest insights and strategies on instructional technologies, personalized learning materials and pedagogical methods to mentor and coach educators in their district - providing seamless movement between blended (traditional and digital) designs.