

VIRTUAL/ONLINE COURSES

The District believes that virtual or online courses can be an effective means of instruction for students. Virtual or online courses will be part of the District's educational program, providing students with opportunities to expand their learning environment through the use of online resources that allow for increased accessibility and flexibility in the delivery of instruction.

Definitions

Virtual course – an internet-based or distance education course in which the instructor is not an employee of the District.

Online course – an internet or computer-based course monitored and assisted by an employee of the District.

All virtual/online education programs and courses will be consistent with District instructional goals and aligned with South Dakota's academic standards, curriculum frameworks and assessments, and approved by the South Dakota Department of Education. The administration is directed to periodically review virtual/online courses to ensure they meet curriculum standards.

To Be Eligible

The student must be enrolled in the Spearfish School District. Students must meet and maintain all pertinent enrollment requirements of the district. Students will not be allowed to open enroll into the Spearfish School District to participate in virtual learning.

Student Application for Virtual/Online High School Courses

Students applying for permission to take a virtual/online course will do the following:

- Complete prerequisites and meet with the school counselor and/or principal to confirm the student possesses the skills, knowledge, and motivation needed to be successful in an online learning environment.
- Obtain the written approval of the Principal or his/her designee before enrolling in a virtual/online course.
- Adhere to the District code of conduct to include rules of behavior and consequences for violations.
- The student is required to be in attendance at the high school building for a full regularly scheduled period as they would in any other academic class. This requirement may be waived provided it is approved by the administration and the student demonstrates adequate grades and progress in the course.
- The student and parents must sign a contract for any virtual/online course.

Credit for Virtual/Online Coursework

High school students may earn academic credit toward graduation requirements by completing virtual/online courses approved by the South Dakota State Board of Education. Students taking such courses must be enrolled in the District. Students must complete all coursework within the calendar structure of the District unless permission is granted from the administration in advance.

Awarding Credit for Virtual/Online Coursework

The school must receive an official record of the final grade before awarding credit toward graduation. Only approved courses shall be recorded on student transcripts. Credit for virtual/online coursework that a student completes prior to enrollment in the Spearfish High School will be transferred subject to the following conditions:

- Virtual or online credit granted by another accredited high school will be approved and added to the student's transcript.
- Virtual or online credit completed in a non-accredited school or home school setting will be subject to the District's credit transfer process.

Cost For Virtual/Online Courses

The District will pay all costs for any course being delivered via the virtual school if it is part of the District's regular offering coursework and it is the only delivery method of that course. Any exceptions will be at the discretion of the principal. The student may be requested to provide a deposit for the course fees, which will be fully refunded upon successful completion of the course.

In all other instances, the student will be responsible for all costs of the virtual/online courses. This includes the following, but is not limited to:

- Registration and/or costs of the course from the delivery source
- Costs required for credit
- Costs for textbooks (provided the District does not have the textbook)
- Costs for resources including lab materials

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