Virtual Distance Learning

VDL Handbook 2026-2027

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Virtual Distance Learning Handbook

Revised July 2026

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Student Expectations in Virtual Distance Learning

Student Code of Conduct in Virtual Learning Environment

Although our classroom environment is virtual, the standards of behavior are as important as they are in brick-and-mortar schools. Our virtual classrooms are real classrooms with real teachers and students; therefore, appropriate student behavior is expected. To promote the understanding of LCPS students regarding how to behave in an online environment, we have developed a code of conduct that all students are required to follow. The Students Rights and Responsibilities addresses student interaction with LCPS staff and other LCPS students, as well as their individual actions.

Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct in Virtual Learning Environment

Although our classroom environment is virtual, visiting and participating in the virtual classroom should be established by teacher invitation. Parents/Guardians are expected to communicate with teachers through email and phone calls during non-class times.

LCPS Residency Expectations and Enrollment with Virtual Distance Learning

LCPS Policy 8115, Individuals Who May be Admitted Free, outlines that in order to be enrolled in Loudoun County Public Schools, you and your child must reside in Loudoun County. Please note #3 Residency in the policy. Students enrolled in Virtual Distance Learning are expected to physically access Virtual Distance Learning platforms daily from their LCPS residential address.

Digital Presence

There are many ways that students will participate online in Virtual Distance Learning. The ways that students represent themselves digitally should contribute to a safe, welcoming, inclusive learning environment. The use of profile pictures, usernames, created digital content, electronic communications, video, and, audio, should be never be illegal, violent, lewd, depict or promote weapons, alcohol, tobaccos, drugs or drug paraphernalia, private body parts, or include language, slogans, profanity, symbols, or hate speech.

Appropriate Use of the Internet

1. Students are expected to use the internet in accordance with LCPS student rights and responsibilities, and LCPS policy, as well as Virtual Distance Learning classroom expectations.
2. In the event there is a claim that a student has violated Policy 8210, Introduction to Student Discipline, they will be notified of the suspected violation and given an opportunity to present an explanation.
3. LCPS students are subject to all local, state, and federal laws governing the Internet. Any student that violates policies and the student code of conduct will be subject to

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disciplinary action that may result in removal from LCPS class as well as other disciplinary or legal action.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance in school is compulsory, and participation in synchronous activities is required. Attendance will be taken during synchronous learning sessions.

- To be marked present in each class, students are required (at a minimum) to turn their cameras on for attendance at the beginning of class and again at the end of class.
- Students should arrive in class on-time and remain in class until they are either dismissed by their teacher, or the class ends as scheduled.
- Students will engage in class in a variety of ways, including having cameras on when the teacher requests, participation via voice, in the chat, and additional actions as specified by the teacher.
- The Virtual Distance Learning team will conference with students and parents/guardians related to any concerns about attendance and participation.
- Students not making progress in their learning due to absence or non-participation in learning activities may require a personalized intervention. Possible interventions include collaboration with the home school, including a reassignment to in person instruction.

Assessment & Grading

Classes taken in Virtual Distance Learning will be assessed and graded, exactly as in person learning. Teachers will implement and adhere to the assessment and grading policy, Policy 5030, Assessment and Grading. Teachers and staff will implement interventions as needed to support all students. Grade-level or collaborative learning teams will meet virtually to plan for personalized interventions or enrichment based on ongoing student performance. Standardized testing is accomplished in-person at the student's home school with LCPS.

Class Materials

All assignments and instructional materials will be accessible in **Schoology**, the LCPS learning management system. Physical class materials may require pickup during times to be scheduled and communicated by the Virtual Distance Learning team. Teachers may also request families to provide materials to support learning. If access to materials is a challenge, please contact a member of the Virtual Distance Learning team.

Devices- LCPS Chromebooks & Cell Phones

Students must access Virtual Distance Learning platforms from their LCPS Chromebook for all instructional activities. In April 2025, a new Virginia state law was passed, **restricting the use of personal student technology** for students in all grades during the school day, except for those with documented accommodations. To update LCPS Policy 8655: Student Personal Device Use, the community provided input on the policy, and LCPS staff made adjustments based on the

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feedback and state law. The School Board passed the updated Policy 8655 in December 2025, with implementation across all schools and programs in January 2026.

LCPS Chromebooks needing repair should be brought to the Digital Experience Specialist at the home school. Contact an administrator in Virtual Distance Learning if you need assistance getting in contact with the Digital Experience Specialist at the home school to make an appointment.

Discipline in Virtual Distance Learning

LCPS School Administrators will initiate the following procedure for improper behavior in any class during the virtual learning environment. The Virtual Distance Learning team may collaborate with the administrative staff at the home school for disciplinary needs.

1. A student may be temporarily removed by staff if a student violates LCPS Student Code of Conduct in the virtual learning environment.
2. The parent(s) or adult caregiver of any student shall be notified if a student is removed from the virtual environment for more than 30 minutes. The teacher will report all violations to school level administration.
4. Any additional violations of LCPS code of conduct or Acceptable/Responsible Use or the Students Rights & Responsibilities may result in additional disciplinary action. Families should contact their school administrator with questions.
5. School level Administrators will review and investigate all reports of threats or cyberbullying. Cyberbullying refers to bullying by a student(s) towards another through electronic communication. Cyberbullying includes such things as sending mean, vulgar or threatening messages or images; posting sensitive private information about another person; pretending to be someone else in order to humiliate another person; and defamatory online social media websites.(General Assembly (§ 22.1-276.01 the Code of Virginia):
6. For more egregious violations (threatening, cyberbullying, using racial slurs in the virtual platform) that may result in suspension or recommendation for expulsion, school administration may proceed with extending discipline once school is back in session, either later this school year, or the beginning of the coming school year.

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Roles and Responsibilities in Virtual Distance Learning

Each staff member, family and student has an important role in the success of Virtual Distance Learning. The following table outlines examples of the responsibilities of various staff roles in supporting distance learning.

Role	Responsibilities During Virtual Distance Learning
Students	- Identify a distraction-free space in your home where you can learn comfortably - Establish daily routines for learningCheck your Schoology courses and LCPS email daily - Participate in synchronous learning opportunities - Be a good digital citizen - Be mindful of appropriate content and contributions in the following formats: - Physical background, profile pictures, usernames, created digital content, electronic communications, video, and audio - Profile images and student attire should remain in accordance with the LCPS Student Dress Code - Communicate with your family, teacher and/or school counselor if you feel you need additional resources or are feeling overwhelmed Attendance will be taken during synchronous learning sessions. - To be marked present in each class, students are **required** (at a minimum) to turn their cameras on for attendance at the beginning of class and again at the end of class. - Students should arrive in class on-time and remain in class until they are either dismissed by their teacher, or the class ends as scheduled. - Students will engage in class in a variety of ways, including having cameras on when the teacher requests, participation via voice, in the chat, and additional actions as specified by the teacher. - The Virtual Distance Learning team will conference with students and parents/guardians related to any concerns about attendance and participation. - Students not making progress in their learning due to absence or non-participation in learning activities may require a personalized intervention, including collaboration with the home school for strategies, which could include a reassignment to in person instruction.

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	- Academic integrity and the honest completion of assignments and formative and summative assessments - Review of Schoology and StudentVue for progress monitoring
Parents/Guardians/ Families	- Help your child establish routines - Identify a distraction-free space in your home where your child can learn comfortably and uninterrupted - Please remember that students are in virtual class. **Kindly do not interrupt or join in the virtual class meeting without permission from the teacher. Please email your student's teacher to schedule a time to conference.** - Encourage physical activity and exercise - Track your child's learning via Schoology - Support your child's digital citizenship - Communicate with your child's teacher, school counselor or administrator if you feel your child needs additional resources or is feeling overwhelmed - Maintain an appropriate educational environment, support student's ability to access and participate in distance learning, including supplies needed for instructional activities, which may include pick-up at the home school or the Virtual Loudoun Office - Be the primary in-person monitor to provide full-time supervision for your student in the home daily. This is to ensure your student is safe, has appropriate supervision, and is attending school daily - Participate and communication with teachers and staff in support of the student - If your student has sustained a physical injury, such as a concussion, sprain, fracture, etc. that may impact your student's daily schedule with VDL, please reach out to the VDL School Counseling team. We will work with you and your students' teachers to support success during the recovery period.
Virtual Distance Learning School Administrators	- Communicate with families regarding Virtual Distance Learning. Partner with families to resolve questions or needs - Ensure Program staff (Special Education, English Learner, School Counselors) collaborate with concurrently enrolled home school support staff (School Based Facilitators, UMHT, Reading Specialists, Librarians) support student participation and respond to the unique needs of each student - Engage staff in professional learning and collaborative learning teams (CLTs) - Facilitate meetings between students, families and teachers in support of student success - Plan for the unique needs Virtual Distance Learners and engage the community in a supportive learning environment

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Virtual Distance Learning Teachers	- Plan for and engage students in synchronous learning aligned to school and division guidelines - Schedule check in for student support as needed - Facilitate student collaboration virtually as needed - Collaborate with Virtual Distance Learning and home school administration to connect with families not engaging in distance learning - Collaborate with other teachers and colleagues to provide appropriate accommodations and support to all students - Collaborate with home school teams to implement and monitor student IEPs and 504 Plans to support student goals and accommodations - Respond to communication from school and families on a consistent basis - Participate in Virtual Distance Learning meetings and division professional learning
Virtual Distance Learning Special Education Teachers and Case Managers	- Plan, deliver, support, and engage students with disabilities in synchronous learning to provide appropriate accommodations, assistive technology, and specialized instruction as per the student IEP - Implement IEPs to support student goals and use data to monitor progress - Monitor the use and effectiveness of accommodations - Collaborate with related service providers and all IEP team members - Respond to communication from Virtual Distance Learning Program staff, home school and families on a consistent basis - Participate in Virtual Distance Learning meetings and division professional learning as available - Collaborate with Virtual Distance Learning administration as well as with home school administration and UMHT to connect with families and students as appropriate
Related Service Providers	- Collaborate with teachers to support student needs - Develop learning resources for families as needed - Deliver services using multiple platforms such as video modeling, Google Classroom, Schoology, and/or teletherapy - Respond to communication from school and families on a consistent basis - Participate in IEP meetings, support student goals, monitor progress, and provide accessibility support

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School Counselors	- Provide counseling and Socio Emotional Learning lessons using evidence-based techniques to promote wellness - Provide synchronous lessons for elementary and middle school age students - Provide online webinars and synchronous sessions to inform students of important school counseling information - Support students/parents in individual academic advising sessions to help relieve academic concerns and stress - Develop schedules for student registrations (K-12) - Collect individual course requests and placement recommendations for FY26 to support master schedule development - Provide web access for college and career information - Collaborate with school administration and teachers to ensure a smooth transition from grade 5 to 6 and 8 to 9 - Collaborate with schools to ensure smooth transitions into Virtual Distance Learning or brick-and-mortar schools - Provide check in/check out with parents/students as requested - Provide telecounseling or consult services to students - Participate in Program level multidisciplinary meetings and support Multi Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) interventions and implementation
Instructional Facilitators of Technology	- Support teachers with professional learning and just-in-time training on instructional best-practices and technology tools - Support teachers with designing instruction to be delivered at a distance - Help teachers identify and select appropriate instructional practices and technology tools for distance learning - Support the Program administration in planning for and addressing the unique needs of their school community to support distance learning - Share best-practices and lessons learned with other IFTs and the Office of Educational Technology - Model and promote digital citizenship skills with teachers and staff
LCPS District Staff	- Provide high-quality professional learning to teachers and other school staff - Develop, curate and distribute resources to the Program in support of students, teachers, and families

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Additional Information

Virtual Distance Learning for Students with Disabilities

A student's Individual Education Program (IEP) team will determine the instructional programming and related services based upon the needs of the student. Students will have access to augmentative/alternative communication resources in accordance with their IEP. Special education and general education teachers will continue to collaborate to provide instruction and support to students with disabilities based on their IEP goals. Ongoing support and collaboration with families will continue through the IEP meeting process, eligibility determination, reevaluation, and other intervention meetings.

For qualified disabled students under Section 504, a committee of knowledgeable individuals shall develop or modify a Section 504 Plan that is appropriate for the Virtual Distance Learning setting. Accommodations are focused on what is necessary to meet the student's needs related to their limitation as adequately as the needs of non-disabled students.

Virtual Distance Learning for English Learners

Teachers of English Learner students will utilize their distance learning time with students to focus on independent reading, tasks, and assignments through Schoology, and will also include asynchronous learning opportunities that help to develop English Learners' background knowledge (such as videos, teacher-led mini-lessons, visual and vocabulary support) that could be viewed independently to prepare students for in-person learning.

EL teachers will embed language accessibility and supports in their lessons, activities, and learning experiences. EL teachers and general education teachers will collaborate in order to support students accessing the general education curriculum through comprehensible input while also providing frequent check-ins with their EL students.

Virtual Distance Learning for Gifted Learners

SPECTRUM (Grades 6-8): A gifted resource teacher will provide a combination of synchronous and asynchronous enrichment opportunities for identified gifted learners in grades 6-8. Lessons will focus on the overarching themes of the gifted curriculum (e.g., Business & Economics, Communication & Culture, Technology & Engineering, and Ethics & Perspectives.).

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