



Mansfield Independent School District

Virtual School Policy Guidelines/Handbook

Access to the technology utilized by Mansfield ISD Virtual School courses imposes certain responsibilities and obligations. Appropriate use is ethical and honest, and demonstrates respect for physical and intellectual property, system security protocols, individuals' rights to privacy and to freedom from intimidation, harassment, and unwarranted annoyance. All participation regarding online activity must comply with the MISD technology department's student acceptable use policy.

<http://www.mansfieldisd.org/departments/technology/pdf/studentaup.pdf>

All Virtual School questions/concerns should be directed to:

Paul Cash, Director of Student Services, Mansfield ISD
Office: 817-299-6364 E-mail: cashpa@mansfieldisd.org

Use Virtual School course resources only for authorized purposes

Students will respect the work and creativity of the authors of materials that are viewed on the Internet. Therefore, students will not copy files from the Internet for any use other than for personal use, unless the Webmaster explicitly states that the page may be copied freely.

Use only legal versions of copyrighted software in full compliance with licensing agreements.

Students will respect the work and creativity of software developers and not download or duplicate licensed software. Students may download public domain programs and will pay for shareware programs. Students assume all risks in regard to programs, which are public domain, shareware, or licensed.

Use responsible, ethical behavior.

The Internet is a global network of information. Information available ranges from being useful and scholarly to being incorrect, possibly plagiarized, and offensive. There are no gatekeepers or systems of censorship in place on the Internet.

Use technology and the Mansfield ISD Virtual School format in a respectful manner.

Students will not use the Mansfield ISD Virtual School network for financial gain or for any commercial or illegal activity. Students will follow rules written and unwritten, pertaining to Internet etiquette, and communicate respectfully to all people. Students will not attempt to bypass security protocols on servers or workstations.

Students are expected to use the Internet and associated technology appropriately.

Actions that constitute inappropriate use include, but are not limited to:

- Intentionally wasting resources.

- Using the school's hardware, software or network for commercial purposes.
- Participating in any type of teleconferencing or chat without permission of instructional staff or using e-mail without instructional staff permission and supervision.
- Using another's password.
- Revealing passwords to others.
- Vandalizing any part of the computer hardware, software or the network. This includes theft of any hardware or software.
- Displaying or sending offensive messages or pictures on the network or while using any school owned computer.
- Sending a threatening or harassing message.
- Trespassing in another's files or misusing or deleting another's files.
- Publishing inappropriate information on the district Web page.
- Other unethical use of the school's network system or to interfere with or disrupt network users, services or equipment as determined by the Chief Technology Officer.
- Interfering with the integrity of a network system.
- Interfering with the integrity of any e-mail system.
- Illegal activities that violate either State or Federal laws or District policies.
- Intentional spreading of embedded messages or files.
- Violating copyright laws. This includes making illegal copies of school owned software.

Respect individuals' freedom from harassment.

Students will protect the privacy of their classmates. Therefore, students will not publish any names, passwords, email addresses, or other information pertaining to other students. Students understand that Mansfield ISD Virtual School courses require use of email and newsgroups as a means of communication and learning; and will, therefore respect the technology as a means of instruction. Students will not use their email account as a means to harass people who use the Internet, including other Mansfield ISD Virtual School students.

By participating in newsgroups, you agree to allow others access to your email address.

Technical support will be provided by Mansfield ISD Virtual School.

If the student has technical difficulties with his/her on-line course, s/he should contact Technical Support at helpdesk@mansfieldisd.org or 817-299-HELP. It is the student's responsibility to contact the course instructor, the help desk, and/or the Virtual School office if s/he experiences any technical difficulties.

Academic integrity is a critical issue in any educational setting

Mansfield ISD Virtual School is committed to academic excellence for every student and believes in and supports each student's personal acquisition of knowledge.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in Mansfield ISD Virtual School.

It is essential that online students work through each assignment in the course and take the course assessments independently. In addition to carefully reviewing each student's course work, Mansfield ISD Virtual School administrators, course instructors, mentor course

instructors monitor academic integrity electronically through the course delivery system and software programs.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: plagiarism, fabrication of information or citations, submitting the work of another person, allowing another person to substitute for oneself in completing course work or taking a course test, submitting work previously used without informing the instructor and securing written approval, or tampering with computer files and/or academic work of other students.

Academic dishonesty will result in one or more of the following actions:

- Loss of grade points,
- Removal from course,
- Failure to receive credit for the course, and/or
- Loss of eligibility to earn credits through Mansfield ISD Virtual School.

If an offense occurs, the student will be notified by email from their course instructor that their parents and local school district officials will be notified of the infraction and the appropriate disciplinary action taken.

Please Note: Regardless of whether the academic dishonesty is a first or second offense, if the incident is deemed severe, the student will be removed from the course.

Enrollment

Students must have campus approval for enrollment in any online course.

Credit will be granted through each high school in accordance with district policies. Students may earn a maximum of **two** credits through a combination of correspondence and Virtual School courses and may be enrolled in **one** Virtual School course at a time. Grades earned in Virtual School courses shall be used in computing GPA and determining class rankings. [Reference: Mansfield ISD School Board Policy EEJC Local]

In order to earn credit for an online course, a student must:

1. complete all course work and
2. in the process of completing all course work, must earn at least a 70 average.

Seniors who are enrolled in online courses to earn credits required for graduation shall complete the course and submit the grade for recording at least **30 days** prior to the graduation date in order to be eligible for graduation at the end of the term.

As in any course of study, student success in online courses is dependent on the amount of attention given to each assessment, study skills, the experiences brought to the course, and the help you receive while taking the course.

Mansfield ISD Virtual School encourages students to give each assessment your best effort. Seek assistance from your course instructor regarding course content, tech support regarding technical problems, and/or the Mansfield ISD Virtual School office for other needs or questions.

Communication between the student and the course instructor will be through email.

Upon enrolling in the course the student will receive an introductory communication from his/her course instructor. It is important that the student follow the instructions contained in that communication. Each student will receive a schedule for completing and turning in course assignments and tests. Students are expected to adhere to the schedule and turn in assignments on time. With the exception of weekends and holidays, course instructors will usually respond to email within 24 to 48 hours. Grades for course instructor-graded assignments will usually be posted within 72 hours. There will be exceptions to this standard response time. For example, course instructors may take short vacations. Course instructors will communicate with their students to give them prior notice of any time that they will be unavailable.

Parental support and supervision will ensure student success.

Parents should assist their student by helping set up his/her workstation, encouraging active ongoing participation in the course, and monitoring progress. The student's status can be obtained at any point by accessing the grade book within his/her online course by using his/her login and password.

A student must complete any course in which he has enrolled before the end of each semester

The expiration date of enrollment is always the end of the semester for which the student enrolled. However, the student may complete a course in as few as 9 weeks, but not more than a semester. If a student has not completed the course within the semester, he/she will be dropped from the course, and tuition will not be reimbursed. The student must communicate with the course instructor on a regular basis. If a student has not communicated with his Virtual School course instructor within 10 days of registration, or if he/she fails to maintain the schedule for completing and turning in assignments, he/she will be dropped from the course, and tuition will not be reimbursed.

All district policies related to academic dishonesty and participation will apply to online courses. [Reference: Mansfield ISD School Board Policy EIA Local]

By enrolling in this course, students accept the terms of this handbook and acknowledge and hold Mansfield ISD Virtual School harmless for any injury or offense that may be suffered by accessing information on the Internet.

Students who violate any part of this handbook or engage in any other activity which school authorities consider inappropriate will be subject to disciplinary action consistent with Mansfield ISD academic dishonesty policies and procedures.