



# NICHOLAS COUNTY

## S C H O O L S

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*Virtual School Policy*

*Reference: SB 630: West Virginia Code §18-5F-1 et seq.*

*Issued: Jan. 1, 2018*

*Revision:, July 2, 2018, July 20, 2020, Aug. 2021*

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1. Vision and Mission Statement. Recognizing that students learn in a variety of ways, Nicholas County's Virtual Online program promotes the education of each student through the innovation of online learning, equipping students with the knowledge to achieve personal and professional success in becoming college and career ready.

Nicholas County Schools will use virtual learning opportunities which offer students numerous benefits in terms of time flexibility and program customization. Along with these advantages, students also assume increased responsibility in time management, organization, self-direction, and self-regulation. Virtual learning opportunities will offer a full online learning option for students in grades 6-12. Courses added to the catalog will be reviewed by a team to ensure standards are met. In accordance with the statute, Senate Bill 630, school districts can develop local policies to regulate and guide the county online program. Virtual learning is online courses aligned to state standards that are free to parents and rigorous. These courses are typically taught by Master level, certified, West Virginia licensed teachers. Virtual learning will be partnered with county schools to provide a free individualized online learning solution for students on the path to high school graduation.

2. Nicholas County Virtual School Student Profile. Virtual school students are enrolled in classes for 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades. Nicholas County's Virtual School students' backgrounds are diverse. Our students may be any of the following:
  - Students who are homeschooled and enrolled at the local public school
  - Students who are taking courses both at home and school. The student has the option to complete their coursework at home or may also choose to come to school to participate in specifically selected courses
  - Students who are enrolled in a traditional educational program at the local school and take some courses through the Virtual School
  - Students who are full-time virtual school learners and complete all coursework online at home
  - Students must have a 'green card' with emergency contact information in order to participate in extra-curricular events

3. Student Eligibility and Requirements. Students who meet the following requirements are eligible to participate in the virtual education program:
- Enrolled in Nicholas County Schools as a **full-time student** (6 courses per semester)
  - Enrolled in courses to meet Nicholas County Schools graduation requirements
  - If a student only wants to participate in extracurricular activities and not receive a high school diploma, the student must be enrolled in a minimum of one core class
  - Parents and students must successfully complete a district defined virtual education orientation course
  - Meet school system and/or state enrollment requirements for the course(s) in questions including successful completion of any prerequisite courses
  - Maintain a minimum grade of a 60 on a numerical grade scale in courses taken during the current academic year
  - Have access to consistent, daily internet service
  - Maintain a minimum of weekly communication
  - Nicholas County Schools may not be able to provide transportation other than the regular morning and afternoon bus routes for the local school
4. Attendance. Virtual School will take attendance daily. Successful progression will mean completing courses to graduate with one's four-year cohort, or taking at least four courses to participate in extracurricular activities. To receive an eligibility form for a driver's license, students must be progressing successfully in the coursework and communicating weekly with staff and have less than 15 absences. Students are required to submit assignments and interact on a weekly basis.

The school system reserves the right to set specific attendance requirements for each virtual course. The superintendent or designee is authorized to develop alternate attendance policies for virtual courses, provided that students in such programs are given notice of the attendance requirements. A student's failure to comply with such requirements may result in administrative action including, but not limited to, probation or removal from the class or charge of truancy, if appropriate.

All full-time virtual students will be enrolled as a student in the local high school. Upon satisfying all graduation requirements, students enrolled in the virtual pathway will receive a high school diploma from the high school in which they are enrolled. These students will be counted in the average daily membership. All full-time virtual students will participate in all state testing and accountability requirements.

A student will not be permitted to enroll in virtual school the following school year if they have not met all the state testing and WVDE accountability requirements.

5. **Extracurricular Activities.** Students enrolled as a full-time student or part-time taking at least one course are eligible to participate in extracurricular activities in the school in which they are enrolled. Students must meet the same extracurricular activity eligibility requirements as students enrolled in the traditional day program including any applicable WVSSAC requirements. Student residency for purposes of participating in extracurricular activities will be determined in accordance with applicable Nicholas County Schools' policies and WVSSAC policies.
  
6. **Course Progression and Guidelines.** Students are required to progress through online courses at a rate comparable to the progression of a traditional class. Student performance will be monitored and reported on regular intervals consistent with a traditional day program by the counselor they are assigned to at the school. Guidelines for taking a virtual course if student is attending school in the traditional manner:
  - 1) Students taking such course must be enrolled in one of the county schools.
  - 2) The course is not offered at the student's home school.
  - 3) The schools offer the course, but the student is unable to take it due to an unavoidable scheduling conflict.
  - 4) The district has expelled the student from the regular school setting, but education services are to be continued.
  - 5) The school administration, the student's teachers, and the student's parents/guardians determine if the student requires a differentiated or accelerated learning environment.
  - 6) A student has failed a course and wishes to recover credits in the subject area.
  - 7) The course may be used as an alternative to summer school instruction with the approval of the school administration.
  - 8) The course may be part of summer school instruction provided the tuition is paid by the student's family and staff supervision/monitoring is available.
  - 9) The course will serve as a supplement to extend homebound instruction.
  - 10) Any other specific condition, which may warrant the use of virtual coursework for the student and is approved by the building principal.
  - 11) All courses will use the state approved grading scale as identified in State Board Policy 2510.
  - 12) Student privacy is important. All laws and FERPA will be followed.

7. **Removal.** Students may be transitioned back to a traditional day program or returned to homeschool for the following reasons:
- Not maintaining a 60 percent in each course taken
  - Progression through coursework falls below the minimum comparable traditional course standard (6 courses per semester)
  - Attendance requirements are not met
  - Cheating, falsifying information, plagiarizing
  - School system policies procedures, rules or regulations are violated, including rules governing the use of technology

The student will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities if the student transfers to homeschool or private school after the student is removed from virtual school.

8. **Withdrawing.** A student may withdraw from a course before 14 calendar school days into a semester without a grade penalty. No grade will be recorded on the student's transcript.

If a student withdraws from a virtual class after 14 school calendar days into a semester and enrolls in the same course at a local high school, then the grade the student had on-line will be transferred to the traditional teacher he/she is enrolled with. If the student does not enroll in the class at the high school, the student will receive a grade of WF.

Any student who withdraws after 12 weeks into the semester will have a grade of an F recorded on their transcript for the virtual course the students took.

9. **School Calendar.** All courses must be complete by the end of each semester as determined by Nicholas County Schools. High School students are expected to earn at least 6 credits each year, if the student wants to graduate on time. Students who do not complete a course by the last day of the semester will be issued a grade reflecting the student's current grade and factoring in any missed assignments, tests or other work product.

10. **Diplomas and Graduation.** Upon satisfying all Nicholas County Schools graduation requirements, students enrolled in the virtual program will receive a high school diploma from Nicholas County Schools. Any virtual program course taken for high school credit, regardless of the grade in which the course was taken, will be entered onto the student transcript and calculated in Grade Point Averages.

11. **Student Support.** Students participating in virtual school will receive at least the following supports:
  - Face to face tutoring will be provided at the local school for courses currently taught through the online platform at an additional cost. Dates and times are determined by the online learning platform.
  - IEP committees will meet to determine the most appropriate, least restrictive environment and the most reasonable accommodations.
  - ELL committees will meet to determine the most reasonable accommodations.
  
12. **Counseling and Guidance Services.** Nicholas County schools will utilize personnel to assist with academic, career, and social needs as they arise. In conjunction with school counselors, students will be assisted with developing an educational plan based on transcripts, standardized assessments, career interests, and other pertinent data. The plan will be reviewed periodically to assess its appropriateness and progress toward completion.
  
13. **Student Responsibilities.** Students should spend the first days making sure they are comfortable with the technology of online learning and capable of mastering the content. Students are responsible for maintaining reliable, daily access to internet. Computer/internet problems will not be accepted as reason for delays in meeting deadlines. Only through continuous communication and consistent work can students be successful in an online course. It is essential that students maintain regular contact with their instructor and submit assignments on time. Once enrolled, students are on a probationary period for two weeks. If any student has not begun the course after two weeks from the enrollment date, the student will be automatically removed and their local school will be notified.
  
14. **Parent Responsibilities.** Parents play a vital role in their child's education. Parents need to ensure there is access to the necessary technology. They need to monitor their child's progress and grades with the virtual courses. Parents need to provide support and encouragement as students are working on their online courses. It is important that parents provide a structure and guidance when helping their child to complete the course work. Parents also need to be a liaison between the student and the teacher as needed.

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15. Technology. Students will need a device such as a laptop or desktop computer. The school system can help with providing a device to students in need that is currently being utilized in grades K-12. Reliable, daily Internet access is the responsibility of the family. Damage to or loss of school equipment and facilities wastes taxpayer's money and undermines the school program. Therefore, if a student damages or loses school property, the student or his/her parents will be required to pay for the replacement or damage. Use of technology will follow county policy and requirements.
16. Student Concerns, Suggestions, and Grievances. The local school is here for the benefit of the students. The staff is here to assist a student in becoming a responsible adult. If a student has suggestions that could improve the school, he/she should feel free to offer them. Written suggestions may be presented directly to the school administrator.

When concern or grievances arise, the best way to resolve the issue is through communication. No student will be harassed by any staff member or need fear reprisal for the proper expression of a legitimate concern. A student with suggestions, concern and grievances may be directed to the Principal of the local school. In addition, a student has the right to a hearing if the student believes he/she has been improperly denied participation in a school activity or has been subjected to an illegal rule or standard.