

Welcome to “The Portal powered by Optima Academy Online”

Outline of Pilot Program:

“The Portal powered by Optima Academy Online” is a Virtual Reality (VR) Pilot Program at Bridgeport-Spaulling (BSCS) that will create an environment for students who have a desire or a need for a non-traditional learning experience. This program will provide students with the opportunity to learn both in a **synchronous and asynchronous environment**. Students will work asynchronously in a learning management system (LMS) on performance-, problem-, and project-based learning experiences. Students (in addition to support through the LMS) will receive instruction synchronously from a teacher through a virtual-, extended-reality experience.

Students will engage with other students in courses that are of “normal” class-size; be supported by a teacher; have access to social-emotional support; have an administrator assigned; and will be able to participate in several experiences just as other students. Students' learning will not only be monitored by the teacher, but also by a district assigned mentor and support staff.

The BSCS VR program will act as a pilot program for the 2023-24 year. If successful, the program will look to expand as appropriate for future years. This program will follow Michigan law and pupil accounting standards. The program will comply with section 5-O-D of the [Michigan Pupil Accounting Manual](#).

Students Enrolling:

Through the pilot stage of the program, students will come from within the district or meet the requirements of School-of-Choice as outlined by Michigan Law and District Policy.

The district expects the pilot to have a minimum of 50 participants in grades 5-9 reached for the fall enrollment and that the number of students needed for sustainability will be determined during the pilot. Plans for expansion are immediate. Eligibility is outlined below.

Currently, enrollment into the BSCS VR program is open to students who are in grades 5-9. Expansion to grades 3 -12 is expected.

Eligible Students:

Students enrollment will be based on a application/referral/request basis until the program is filled. Families, teachers, administrators and those who have the best interest of the student in mind, may refer a student to the BSCS pilot program. At the time of the referral, BSCS staff will review the referral and determine if the fit of the unique programming is best for the student based on, but not limited to: format of instruction, supports available to students, student prior success, and learning environment for the student. Final determination of student enrollment into the program will be at the discretion of the superintendent. Equal enrollment opportunities will be made available for all students. Please keep in mind – Virtual Reality learning is NOT for everyone.

Instruction can be accessed either in a VR Headset, tablet, or web browser. VR Headsets may be provided upon request for students in grades 5-9.

Hours and Days:

Students in the BSCS VR pilot program will be required to meet the hours and days requirements for the State of Michigan. Students will follow the same schedule as students in BSCS not enrolled in the VR program.

Students in the BSCS VR program will not be required to attend class in person. Instead these students will be engaging in their courses from home or a location which meets their needs. Students will have two-way communication with the teacher daily through the synchronous instructional time. Additionally, the district will work to have two-way communication with the students on a weekly basis through other staff.

Students in the VR program are also a part of the entire student body. Therefore, for daily attendance, they are a part of the entire population who is scheduled to attend, as appropriate.

A sample schedule is included below. Sample schedule is subject to change and is only an example.

Testing:

Students in grades 3-8 and 11 in Michigan are required to participate in annual testing to meet state and federal law. The BSCS pilot program is focused on students in grades 5 - 9 and students will need to participate in annual testing that also includes the PSAT for 8th and 9th graders. Because of the testing window provided by the department of education, BSCS will schedule times for the students to report to campus and complete state and federal testing requirements.