



**VIRGINIA**  
VIRTUAL ACADEMY<sup>SM</sup>

**POWERED BY STRIDE K12**



**High School Student Handbook**

**Grades 9-12**

**School Year 2023-2024**

Dear Students and Learning Coaches,

Thank you for selecting Virginia Virtual Academy (VAVA) as your high school of choice. The high school program of Virginia Virtual Academy is a tuition-free educational opportunity that has partnerships with local school districts. Our goals are to awaken the power of learning in every student through a personalized experience that offers engaging courses, caring teachers in a vibrant and diverse school community. We promise to provide a quality education that allows students to learn and achieve curricular goals at their own pace. VAVA teachers are experienced and passionate educators who are fully licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia in each of their subject assignments. Our school counselors and teachers are committed to supporting students using a variety of effective online instructional strategies. We strive to build partnerships with our students and their learning coaches so that students can set and achieve their goals. At Virginia Virtual Academy we pride ourselves on being both parent and student friendly. Our goals include maintaining a high level of student achievement, providing outstanding student support, and facilitating the successful transition for students to further their personal growth at any level of post-secondary education or choice of career. VAVA's mission is founded upon support for one another and respect for individual differences. Because we value diversity, we honor the unique qualities of each student in our school.

Together, as partners in education, we can achieve these goals for our students, your children. We look

forward to a great year at Virginia Virtual Academy!

Yours in Education,

Dr. Kenneth E. Moles, II

Executive Director, Virginia Virtual Academy

Virginia Virtual Academy, along with our school division partners, have set minimum enrollment criteria for our virtual education setting. It is our desire that all students are successful in this unique environment. Academic criteria are set for both initial enrollment and re-registration at Virginia Virtual Academy. Students who do not meet the academic criteria will not be invited to re-register for subsequent school years.

## **Criteria for Enrollment and Re-registration**

### **Minimum GPA**

High school applicants must have a minimum GPA of 2.5. In order to re-enroll, students must remain in good academic standing, successfully completing at least 5 units of credit, and passing a minimum of 3 core courses each year.

### **SOL scores**

High school applicants must submit a Spring 2023 SOL score report indicating a scaled score of at least 375 for each subject area. Students are expected to make adequate progress toward verified credit requirements in order to re-register at VAVA each year.

### **Attendance**

Current VAVA students who are not compliant in the areas of class connect attendance and the logging of hours may not be admitted the following year and may even be administratively withdrawn during the current year. Learning coaches must regularly log attendance hours throughout the year and keep attendance records up to date (no more than 5 missing days at a time) to remain compliant.

### **Student Records**

Official transcripts or home-school records showing all high school credit hours earned are required at the time of enrollment to ensure proper course placement. A record of all standardized test scores is also required.

## **Dual Enrollment with Another Public High School Not Permitted**

VAVA partners with various local school districts to provide free, online public education. Our high school students are enrolled in a Virginia Public School, therefore, may not be enrolled in another public school at the same time. As a result, please note the following policies:

VAVA students **MAY NOT** take courses at another public school **DURING THE SCHOOL DAY** –even if the courses are taken not-for-credit.

VAVA students **MAY** participate in **AFTER SCHOOL** activities and clubs at their local public school.

VAVA students **MAY** be able to participate in **VHSL high school sports** at their local public school, **with the permission from the local school division superintendent**. See counselor for details.

VAVA students **MAY** participate in sports through **local recreational leagues** not affiliated with VHSL.

## **NCAA Approval Status**

All VAVA courses are approved and accredited by the Virginia Department of Education, but the NCAA Clearinghouse does not approve most virtual education credits, including those earned at K12 schools. **If your student wants to pursue sports in college, VAVA is NOT the right fit at this time.** We are continually working toward gaining NCAA approval, but if your child is a college-bound

athlete, we strongly encourage you to pursue other educational options for your child. The only K12 school currently approved by the NCAA is the K12 International Academy, which is tuition-based school. K12 homeschool curriculum is also available. Please refer to the NCAA for homeschool requirements.

## **Student and Learning Coach Responsibilities**

### **Student Expectations**

Students are expected to attend all live Class Connect sessions for their courses. If a student misses a session due to an excused absence (medical, family commitment, etc.) they will be expected to watch the class recording prior to the next class connect session and complete assignments related to the missed session. Because there is a very broad window during which assignments may be submitted, only under very extenuating circumstances (including medical emergencies, etc.) are extensions granted past the end date of the assignment. In these situations, students are expected to email teachers with a list of assignments for which they will need extensions.

### **Learning Coach Duties**

The learning coach is responsible for logging student attendance each day and recording any days that the student takes off. These may include sick days and vacation days. It is important that students remain compliant by logging into the OMHS every day. Learning Coaches play a pivotal role in keeping the student accountable and ensuring they are keeping up with the pace of each course. We have found it is very difficult for students to catch up once they fall behind in a course. Please work with your child to set up a consistent routine to promote success in the on-line environment.

### **Student Support**

Virginia Virtual Academy will follow their Response to Intervention (RTI) plan for students struggling academically. Teachers will monitor progress weekly and students who need specific support in their course will be invited to a targeted intervention session with their teacher. Students with multiple failing courses will be monitored and contacted by their homeroom teacher for up to 4 weeks. If there is not adequate progress, the student will be referred to their counselor and administrator to develop a plan of action based on the needs of the student.

### **Academic Integrity (Cheating and Plagiarism)**

All assignments are assumed to be the student's original work. Therefore, if the student utilizes any ideas that are not his or her original thoughts, the student must cite his or her sources using the format suggested by the teacher, who will provide further guidance. A student who fails to abide by these standards will be subject to disciplinary action. Summative assessments (Unit test, etc.) are expected to be completed in one sitting and within three hours unless your student has a documented plan requiring extra time or is otherwise indicated by the teacher.

## Consequences:

First offense – Homeroom teacher will be notified and student and learning coach will receive a written notification from the teacher explaining the offense. The student will be permitted to resubmit the assignment for a possible 80% of the original points.

Second offense – The student will not be allowed to resubmit the assignment, and will be given a 0.

Third offense – The student and learning coach will meet with the academic administrator to discuss further action

## Student Academic Expectations

- Completing assignments daily
- Attending all CC sessions
- Responding to Emails from Teachers and Counselors
- Logging into the OMHS
- Maintaining a GPA of 2.0
- Logging Daily Attendance

## Consequences of Failure to Meet Expectations

Students who do not meet expectations will be contacted by their content and homeroom teachers to provide support to the student and their learning coach. Students who do not make progress within 4 weeks will be referred to their counselor and administrator. The counselor and administrator will work collaboratively with the student and learning coach to support and develop a plan of action. Consequences for not maintaining academic expectations could result in probation or removal from the Virginia Academy.

## Academic Calendar

August 9: Official Start Date (Orientation Courses Only Available)

August 14: Course Start Date

September 4: Labor Day Holiday (No Class Connect Sessions)

October 13: End of First Quarter

November 10: Veterans Day Holiday (No Class Connect Sessions)

November 22-24: Fall Break (No Class Connect Sessions)

December 15: End of Semester 1

December 18-19: Teacher Workdays (No Class Connect Sessions, but will have STAR testing on the plan)

December 20-January 2: Winter Break (No Class Connect Sessions)

January 15: Martin Luther King Holiday (No Class Connect Sessions)

February 19: President's Day Holiday (No Class Connect Sessions)

March 8: End of third Quarter

March 11-15: EOC Writing Test

April 1-5: Spring Break (No Class Connect Sessions)

May 1- May 24: Spring SOL Testing

May 24: End of Semester 2

June 1: In-Person Graduation (Tentative)

## **Academic Policies**

### **Minimum Number of Hours Logged and Supplemental Hours**

Students are required to log 990 hours of attendance in the Online Middle and High School (OMHS) prior to the end of the school year to meet state requirements. Supplemental hours may include any activity that is educational in nature, but does not tie directly to the curriculum. **Students are permitted to log a maximum of 8 supplemental hours per week.** Some examples of supplemental activities include, but are not limited to: volunteer work, fine arts, leisure reading, participation in clubs, religious education, courses taken outside of VAVA and educational family outings. These supplemental hours may be used to help the student reach the 990-hour requirement. Students who are taking less than 6 courses will be expected to log 150 hours per course to meet VAVA's attendance requirement (i.e. 600 hours for 4 courses). Supplemental hours may be used to help students reach the 150-hour per course requirement as well. Please reach out to your school counselor if you have any questions about supplemental hours.

### **Add/Drop Period**

Students may elect to add or drop a course from their schedule within 2 weeks of their start date without consequence. For students starting courses on August 14<sup>th</sup>, you have until August 28<sup>th</sup> to submit a drop course request. Students are encouraged to read the course syllabus carefully in order to understand expectations and course requirements. Students should make course changes as soon as possible so that they do not fall behind in any courses which are being added to the schedule. **Students who add a course to their schedule will be expected to make up any work they have missed.** Requests to add or drop a course should be submitted to your school counselor for approval.

### **Grading Scale and GPA Calculation**

A (90%-100%) = 4.0 pts.

B (80%-89.9%)= 3.0 pts.

C (70%-79.9%)= 2.0 pts.

D (60%- 69.9%)= 1.0 pts.

F (Below 60%) = 0.0 pts.

*\*Grades of 89.5-89.9 will be rounded up to a 90%, 79.5-79.9 to an 80%, etc.*

### **AP Courses**

Advanced Placement (AP) courses are rigorous, college-level courses that are available to students starting in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Students may earn college credit for the courses based on

their scores on the end-of-year AP exam. AP courses are awarded one extra quality point in the GPA calculation.(i.e. A= 5.0 points, B= 4.0 points, etc.) An honors/AP contract is required to be submitted before enrolled in an AP course. *In order to ensure that all students stay on track to graduate and academic success, your teacher and counselor will be reaching out to you at the end of semester 1 if you have a D or an F in the course. It will be strongly encouraged to drop the AP course at this time.* **Prerequisites are required for enrollment in AP courses. Please contact your counselor with any questions.**

## **Honors Classes**

Honors courses are offered in Algebra 1, Geometry and Algebra 2; Earth Science, Biology and Chemistry; English 9 and 10I World Geography and Modern World Studies (WH2). In order to be eligible for an honors course, a student must meet academic and attendance requirements, have teacher recommendation and complete an honors/AP contract. Successful completion of the honors course will result in the “honors” designation on the student report card and transcript (i.e. Honors Algebra 1 rather than Algebra 1). Students may choose to participate in some or all of the honors courses they are eligible for. **Honors courses are NOT Weighted.** *In order to ensure that all students stay on track to graduate and academic success, your teacher and counselor will be reaching out to you at the end of semester 1 if you have a D or an F in the course. It will be strongly encouraged to drop the honors course at this time and move to the regular section.*

## **Repeating a Course/Grade Replacement**

Students may repeat a course they have previously passed in an attempt to earn a higher grade and improve their GPA. If the student earns a higher grade, the new grade will replace the old on the transcript. Students may only earn credit for a course once. Learning coaches must sign the grade replacement form in order for the lower grade to be removed from GPA calculation and transcript and return to their counselor.

## **Multiple Assessment Attempts**

Students in high school are expected to prepare for assessments and use only one attempt. Students may receive an additional attempt on quizzes upon request. One attempt on unit tests and benchmarks is what students are permitted, and it is expected that students will use all available resources to prepare for this attempt. In the event that students have utilized these resources but still struggle on an assessment, it is up to teacher discretion as to whether an extra attempt is permitted.

## **Dual Enrollment**

VAVA students can take college courses at community colleges across the state of Virginia beginning in 11th grade. Contact your local community college to enroll. They will likely request that a high school official sign a form allowing you to take a college-level course or request a letter from the school.

Please submit any requests for permission to enroll in a community college course to your school counselor. At this time, only courses that Virginia Virtual Academy does not offer are eligible for dual credit. These courses must be submitted and approved before taken in order to be eligible for high school credit.

## **Early Graduation Options**

Our flexible schedule allows for many graduation tracks and plans. It is also possible to take just two or three courses junior and senior year, allowing for additional dual enrollment credits and/or part time work. Contact your assigned school counselor to discuss your goals and schedule options. If interested in graduating early, the student must submit a request for early graduation form to your counselor.

## **Summer School and Courses Taken Outside of VAVA**

Students interested in taking courses over the summer for acceleration may select a school from the list of VDOE-approved online providers. Please reach out to your school counselor for the list of approved providers and submit the course for approval. Students will be awarded credit for any approved courses upon receipt of your transcript. These are private organizations, and they do charge tuition or fees for the classes. VAVA is not affiliated with these organizations and does not recommend one school over another.

## **Driver's Education**

Virginia Virtual Academy does not offer Driver's Education, though many of our students have found great success using VADETS online driver's education. Please fill out the permission form on their website for "virtual student" & send it to your school counselor. VAVA is not affiliated with this organization.

## **Transcript Requests**

Please send all request for transcripts to Kim Bond at [kibond@vavirtual.org](mailto:kibond@vavirtual.org)

## **Letters of Recommendation**

If you need a letter of recommendation from a school counselor please fill out the "Letter of Recommendation Request" form, found on [vavahs.com](http://vavahs.com) and email it to your counselor at least 2 weeks prior to the date you need the letter.

## **Worker's Permit**

Virginia law requires students aged 14 and 15 to obtain a work permit prior to beginning a job. Parents can now electronically access, complete, and download the required forms. The application requires submission of two documents: a Permission for Employment form and an Employer Intent to Employ form. These need to be submitted to the Virginia Labor and Employment Law Division. For more information and to access the documents needed for a work permit, please go to [VAeECS](http://VAeECS).

## **Diploma Types and Graduation Requirements**

VAVA offers two diploma tracks with requirements set forth by the Virginia Department of Education: The standard diploma track of 22 credit hours, and the advanced studies diploma track consisting of 26 credit hours. A verified credit is awarded to students who score 400 or higher on the end of course SOL exam in a given subject area. Please contact your assigned high school counselor to discuss which track might be best for you and your post secondary goals. The charts on the following pages show the requirements for each diploma track.





**High School Graduation Requirements**  
**Freshmen Entering SY 2018-2019 and Beyond**

**Standard Diploma (22 credits required)**

All graduation requirements are set forth by the Virginia Department of Education.

<b>COURSE</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>	<b>VERIFIED CREDITS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
ENGLISH	4	2	Courses shall include English 9, 10, 11, and 12 or an advanced equivalent.
MATHEMATICS	3	1	
SCIENCE	3	1	
SOCIAL STUDIES	3	1	Courses shall include U.S. and Virginia History, U.S. and Virginia Government, and one of the following: World Geography or World History II.
HEALTH & PE	2		
ECONOMICS AND PERSONAL FINANCE	1		
ELECTIVES	6		Credits earned for this requirement shall include two credits in fine arts, world language, or CTE. Courses shall also include two electives of which are sequential. If world language is used for the sequential elective, students must take an additional fine art/CTE course.
VIRTUAL COURSE	✓		
FIRST AID/CPR/AED TRAINING	✓		
CTE CREDENTIALING EXAM OR ADVANCED COURSE	✓		Students must take and pass a Career and Technical Education credentialing exam that has been approved by the Virginia Board of Education OR Take one advanced course during their high school career (AP/Honors)

*\*A verified credit indicates a score of 400 or higher on the required VDOE end-of-course SOL test.*



**High School Graduation Requirements Freshmen Entering SY 2018-  
2019 and Beyond**

**Advanced Diploma (26 credits required)**

All graduation requirements are set forth by the Virginia Department of  
Education.

<b>COURSE</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>	<b>VERIFIED CREDITS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
ENGLISH	4	2	Courses shall include English 9, 10, 11, and 12 or an advanced equivalent.
MATHEMATICS	4	1	
SCIENCE	4	1	
SOCIAL STUDIES	4	1	Courses shall include U.S. and Virginia History, U.S. and Virginia Government.
HEALTH & PE	2		
ECONOMICS AND PERSONAL FINANCE	1		
WORLD LANGUAGE	3 or 4		Courses shall include three years of one language or two years each of two languages.
ELECTIVES	4		Credits earned for this requirement shall include one credit in fine arts, world language, or CTE. Courses shall also include two electives of which are sequential. World Language cannot count as the sequential elective unless 3 years of one language and 2 years of another are taken.
VIRTUAL COURSE	✓		
FIRST AID/CPR/AED TRAINING	✓		
CTE CREDENTIALING EXAM OR ADVANCED COURSE	✓		Students must take and pass a Career and Technical Education credentialing exam that has been approved by the Virginia Board of Education OR Take one advanced course during their high school career (AP/Honors)

*\*A verified credit indicates a score of 400 or higher on the required VDOE end-of-course SOL test*

## Testing

### SOL Testing

Students are given their end of course SOL tests in March and May at various testing locations throughout the state. Some students will be expected to take SOL tests in January. Students are expected to attend their scheduled test in person at their assigned location, per the requirements of the Virginia Department of Education. Virtual testing for SOL tests are not an option at this time. Families will be notified well in advance what the testing schedule is. Students who achieve a scaled score of 400 or above will earn a verified credit in the course. Please see graduation requirements to determine how many verified credits are needed for graduation. Students who score between 375-400 will be given an opportunity to retake the test in an attempt to pass within 1-2 weeks of taking the initial tests. Teachers will remediate prior to the retake. Once the verified credit requirement has been met in a given subject area, the student will not have to sit for additional exams in that subject. Biology is a federal requirement, therefore, even if a student took another science and earned a verified credit, every student is required to also take the Biology SOL. If a student received a verified credit in math in middle school, the federal requirement requires them to also take a math SOL while in high school.

### Courses with SOL Exams:

Biology	Reading (English 11)	World History II	World Geography
Algebra 1	Chemistry	US History	Algebra II
Geometry	Earth Science	Writing (English 11)	

### PSAT

We highly recommend that our 10th grade students begin practicing for the SAT and the PSAT/ NMSQT (National Merit Scholar Qualifying Test) which are taken in 11th grade. Two options for practice are available:

- 1) Khan Academy has partnered with CollegeBoard to offer 8 full-length practice SAT exams which can be taken online for free. Visit [www.khanacademy.org/sat](http://www.khanacademy.org/sat)
- 2) Register for the PSAT 10 at your local brick and mortar school. Testing occurs in early spring. Please contact Dr. Bookard if you are having issues finding a test site. **Please note: not all schools offer PSAT 10, travel may be required.**

### PSAT/NMSQT—Junior Year

The PSAT/NMSQT is used by scholarship programs (including the National Merit Scholarship Program) to look for eligible students. While some brick and mortar schools allow students to take this test during their sophomore year, we recommend that students take it in October of their Junior year. This timeline allows the student to complete one extra year of Math and English coursework, which we believe will help them to score higher on the exam. Contact your local brick and mortar school to register for the test and take it at their facility. If you are having an issue with test registration at your local brick and mortar please contact Dr. Bookard.

The CollegeBoard code for VAVA is **470072**. This code should be used when registering for PSAT/NMSQT, SAT, AP and ACT.

## **SAT and ACT**

Our recommendation is that our college-bound students take BOTH the SAT and ACT in the fall or winter of their Junior year to see which test they prefer. These tests can be taken at the student's local brick and mortar school or testing facility. Dates and testing locations can be found at [www.CollegeBoard.org](http://www.CollegeBoard.org) and [www.act.org](http://www.act.org). Once the student determines which test they prefer, they will retake the test at the end of the Junior year in an attempt to improve their score if necessary.

## **ASVAB Test**

Students who wish to join the military should schedule to take the ASVAB test prior to the end of their junior year. They will need to contact a local military recruiter to register. This test serves as both an entrance exam and career exploration tool. Be sure to tell your guidance counselor if you plan to pursue a career in the military.

## **AP Exams**

Students enrolled in AP courses at VAVA are eligible to take the AP exam at the end of the course. Students who score high enough on the exam may earn college credit for the course. Course credit is dependent on college requirements, please check with your college of choice. AP tests will be taken locally at a school near the student's home. It is important that you start making arrangements early in the fall to secure a testing site near you. Please contact our AP Coordinator, Chip Deliee, if you need assistance finding a testing site for your exam. Additional information about AP exam registration will be sent to students taking AP courses in the fall.

## **CTE Credentialing Exam**

The WISE Financial Literacy exam is a proctored exam given to students in the Economics and Personal Finance course during their junior or senior year. This exam is currently given virtually in a proctored session in April for students who require a CTE credential for graduation. (Students who have taken a honors or AP course does not need the CTE credential) Students must pass the exam with a score of 70% or higher in order to earn a CTE Credential. Up to 3 attempts may be given.

## **CPR Training**

The state of Virginia requires students to be trained in Emergency First Aid, CPR, and AED. This training is built into our health curriculum; however a practical skills demonstration must be conducted to meet the graduation requirement as well. We will provide several opportunities for students to demonstrate their skills to a certified instructor at various testing sites throughout the state, free of charge. Students may also opt to participate in training through the American Red Cross, American Heart Association, or another recognized organization in your local area. Students must do both the **online and hands-on portion** of the course. If you obtain certification through Boy

Scouts/Girl Scouts, a Lifeguarding course, or another avenue, you are welcome to email a copy of your certification to your high school counselor or PE teacher for credit.