



**PAVIRtual**  
CHARTER SCHOOL

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# STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK & CODE OF CONDUCT

This handbook and code of conduct provides information for parents and students of PA Virtual. It provides details about the school, its mission and vision, academic programs and responsibilities of parents and students enrolled in the school.

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## Section I: School Information



### Mission, Vision, and Values

#### Our Mission

To provide Pennsylvania public K-12 students a superior cyber charter option, continuously improving by using innovative technologies, well-rounded curricula, and individualized educational delivery in safe learning environments. PA Virtual seeks to equip our students with excellent academic education, social skills, and character development for their lives as productive 21st - century citizens.

#### Our Vision

PA Virtual strives to be a recognized leader nationwide for strategic thinking, innovation, and quality in all areas of K-12 cyber education, serving as a respected exemplar for other cyber schools.

#### Our Core Values

##### **WE CARE** - Student & Family-Centered Values

- Well-Rounded Curricula - Rigorous, well-rounded curricula that enable and inspire students to realize their potential during and after their K-12 education experience, whether this is in the workplace, military, higher education, trade school, or elsewhere.
- Educational Partnerships - Programs that encourage and facilitate the cultivation of educational partnerships among individual students and their parents, faculty, administration, and communities.
- Customized Education - Individualized and customized educational programs providing student-centered individual attention and support based upon each student's gifts and needs.
- Academic Excellence - Empirically measured excellence in student academic achievement.
- Robust Technology - Effective and efficient use of cutting-edge technology, serving as a model for others in the design and delivery of cyber education.
- Engaging Opportunities - Programs that provide engaging, innovative opportunities for extra-curricular activities for the cultivation of students' moral character and social, emotional, physical, and mental development.

##### **I MATTER** - Staff & Organization-Centered Values

- Integrity - Insistence upon both organizational and personal integrity to promote trust, respect, transparency, and honesty.
- Making a Difference - Commitment to the highest standards in governance and leadership development throughout the organization.
- Accountability & Compliance - Fiscal accountability and full legal and regulatory compliance.
- Transparent Communications - Open communications internally and externally with all constituencies.
- Trust & Culture - A workplace culture that nurtures consensus, trust, and recognition as a top employer.
- Effective Operations - Efficiency and effectiveness of operations.
- Reputation - Engaging, effective, and ethical marketing.

### Executive Leadership Team

Name	Position	Email
Dr. Debra Heath-Thornton	Chief Executive Officer	dheath@pavcsk12.org
Dr. Shaikha BuAli	Chief Academic Officer	sbuali@pavcsk12.org
Melissa Paris	Chief Financial Officer	mparis@pavcsk12.org
Sherri Tate	Chief Human Resources & Marketing Officer	state@pavcsk12.org
Douglas Wessels	Chief Public Relations & Accountability Officer	dwessels@pavcsk12.org

### Administrative Leadership Team

Name	Position	Email
Nate Achey	Director of Technology	nachey@pavcsk12.org
Laura Afshari	High School Principal	lafshari@pavcsk12.org
Vicki Andrews-Gilmore	Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	vandrewsgilmore@pavcsk12.org
Kinet Becker	Director of Special Education	kbecker@pavcsk12.org
Jennifer Brodhag	Director of Parent Education & Engagement	jbrodhag@pavcsk12.org
Jason Fitzpatrick	Principal of Pupil Services	jfitzpatrick@pavcsk2.org
Chris Gilligan	Director of Data & Assessment	cgilligan@pavcsk12.org
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Sheik Meah	Director of Marketing & Communications	smeah@pavcsk12.org
Diana Perney	Principal of Onboarding & Professional Development	dperney@pavcsk12.org
Steve Schutt	Elementary School Principal	sschutt@pavcsk12.org
Jamie Shedd	Director of Enrollment	jsheddd@pavcsk12.org
Stefanie Solimine	Director of Human Resources	ssolimine@pavcsk12.org
Rick Verga	Middle School Principal	rverga@pavcsk12.org
Maureen Weinberger	Director of Curriculum, Instruction, & Federal Programs	mweinberger@pavcsk12.org

### Elementary School Leadership & Administration

Name	Position	Email
Steve Schutt	Elementary School Principal	sschutt@pavcsk12.org
Christine Adams	Kindergarten & 1st Grade Assistant Principal	cadams@pavcsk12.org
Emily Sullivan	2nd & 3rd Grade Assistant Principal	esullivan@pavcsk12.org

Chistine Gallagher	4th Grade & Academic Support Assistant Principal	cgallagher@pavcsk12.org
Jennifer Guerra	Program Specialist	jguerra@pavcsk12.org

### Middle School Leadership & Administration

Name	Position	Email
Rick Verga	Middle School Principal	rverga@pavcsk12.org
Regina Kubica	5th Grade Assistant Principal	rkubica@pavcsk12.org
Charles Tranter	6th Grade Assistant Principal	ctranter@pavcsk12.org
Lou Rocchini	7th Grade Assistant Principal	lrocchini@pavcsk12.org
Andrea Wallach	8th Grade Assistant Principal	awallach@pavcsk12.org
Joseph Hutcheson	Instructional Coordinator	jhutcheson@pavcsk12.org
Joshua Allen	Instructional Coordinator	jallen@pavcsk12.org
Nichole Hardy	Program Specialist	nhardy@pavcsk12.org

### High School Leadership & Administration

Name	Position	Email
Laura Afshari	High School Principal	lafshari@pavcsk12.org
Anjeleke Leon	9th Grade Assistant Principal	aleon@pavcsk12.org
Samuel Alba	10th Grade Assistant Principal	salba@pavcsk12.org
Bethany Dombach	11th Grade Assistant Principal	bdombach@pavcsk12.org
Casey Wernick	12th Grade Assistant Principal	cwernick@pavcsk12.org
Gabrielle Eisenhower	Field Placement and Career Services Manager	geisenhower@pavcsk12.org
Kathie Bell	Program Specialist	kbell@pavcsk12.org

## Section II: Notice Of Non-Discrimination

At PA Virtual, we are proud of the diversity of our students and families. We welcome students from across Pennsylvania, from many races, cultures, socio-economic backgrounds, a variety of religious perspectives, and from a range of political and secular affiliations. We celebrate the diversity that brings so much richness to our classroom learning opportunities.

In all of our interactions, emails, and correspondences, we are committed to ensuring a safe and supportive learning environment for all students. As educators, we support learning and growth. And we are being mindful to avoid anything that could be construed to isolate or alienate one or more of our students and families.



It is the policy of the PA Virtual Charter School that no person be denied admission to the school or be denied participation in, be denied benefits of, or be discriminated against in any curricular, extracurricular, student services, recreational or other program or activities, shall not be abridged or impaired because of the person's sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability.

This is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act. Information relative to special accommodation, grievance procedure, and the designated responsible official for compliance with Title VI, Title IX and Section 504 may be obtained by contacting Jason Fitzpatrick, Title IX Officer at [jfitzpatrick@pavcsk12.org](mailto:jfitzpatrick@pavcsk12.org) or 484-680-7729.

More information can be found on [PA Virtual's Enrollment and Discrimination Policies Webpage](#).

### Section III: Definitions and Acronyms

**Academic Dishonesty** – forgery of papers, reports, tests, or notes or any other forms of cheating and/or copying the work of another student or plagiarism from library, publication, or internet sources; actions prohibited by the PA Virtual Charter School and subject to disciplinary action, as well as loss of academic credit.

**Academic Probation Process** – a process that includes several stages intended to help students improve their virtual (synchronous) class attendance.

**Active Rolls** – Refers to students enrolled or attending PA Virtual Charter School.

**Assignment** – a task or piece of work assigned to a student as part of their course of study. Assignments include any work, whether during class or after class, provided by the teacher for students to complete. Some examples include, but are not limited to, homework, tests and quizzes, written presentations, oral presentations, exit tickets, etc.

**Asynchronous Instruction** – also referred to as async instruction, async classes, or just async, is independent learning where students do not attend classes in real time. Students participating in asynchronous learning are not required to attend teacher-led real time classes. Instead, students in asynchronous instruction proceed with their learning in an independent manner, with teachers monitoring academic progress.

**Blackboard** – officially known as Blackboard Inc., is the company that developed the online learning management system and web-based conferencing system used by PA Virtual teachers to conduct synchronous instruction. Some of the platforms, developed by Blackboard Inc., and used by PA Virtual are: Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, Blackboard Learn, and Blackboard Mass Connect.

**Blackboard Collaborate Ultra** – is the Blackboard Inc. web-enabled platform utilized by Grades 9-12 PA Virtual teachers to conduct synchronous instruction and is simply referred to as Collaborate or Ultra.

**Blackboard Learn** – previously known as Blackboard Learning Management System (LMS), and simply referred to as Blackboard by PA Virtual staff, is a web based, learning course management system that keeps Learning Coaches, Students, Teachers, and Staff informed and organized.

**Blackboard Mass Connect** – formerly Blackboard Mass Communication, is a communication platform that allows messaging to various other third-party platforms and applications (text, social media, email, website, mobile apps, etc.) simultaneously.

**Bullying** – an intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act, or a series of acts which create a threatening environment for students, substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school, and/or substantially interferes with a student or students' education.

**Classroom Diagnostic Tool (CDT)** - is a set of online assessments, divided by content areas (Literacy, Mathematics, and Science), and is designed to provide diagnostic information to guide instruction in order to support intervention and enrichment.

**Class Attendance** – To be present in class and actively engaged (responding to teacher prompts and classroom instructions) with teachers and classmates in a scheduled synchronous (virtual) classroom. Students must be present for more than half of the class to receive credit for attending.

**Compulsory School Age** – in Pennsylvania, refers to the period of a child's life from the time the child enters school (which may be no later than at the age of **6** years), until the age of **18** or graduation from a high school, whichever occurs first (22 Pa. Code § 11.13).

**Cumulative** – a total amount, when added together.

**Cyber Charter School** – a public charter school that provides most of its instruction to its students through the Internet or by some other electronic means. Students who are enrolled in a cyber-charter school do most of their schoolwork at home over the computer. Unlike students who attend traditional “bricks and mortar” schools, students in a cyber-charter school do not attend classes in a school building.

**Children and Youth Services (CYS)** – is a department within county departments of Human Services responsible under Pennsylvania Public Law to receive and investigate reports of child abuse and neglect, provide for the temporary care of children not able to remain with their own families, and develop community-wide social service programs that promote family stability.

**Daily Attendance** – the act of logging in to the school’s learning management system (Blackboard). Daily attendance is how the school accounts for daily instructional time for students who are engaged in learning asynchronously (independently). For students who attend synchronous (virtual) classes, led by a teacher at a scheduled time, daily attendance is one of two attendance requirements. The other is class attendance.

**Daily/Class Attendance Equivalence** – When a student is absent from four synchronous (virtual) classes, that is the equivalent of a full daily absence. The daily attendance code in Sapphire will reflect a full day absence.

**Damage or Destruction of Property** – includes graffiti, carving, tearing, cutting, or otherwise marking of property or rendering it useless, broken, damaged, or in need of repair. Students may not harm or destroy school property or the property of others. This includes computer hardware, software, and data of the school, or another student or person, the Internet, or other networks and includes, but is not limited to, the creation, downloading, or uploading of computer viruses. Damage of property of a severe nature is treated as an aggravated offense and could result in criminal charges and expulsion from the school.

**Disruption** – any action that impedes orderly classroom procedures or interferes with the orderly operation of the school.

**Disruptive Language** – any language that impedes orderly classroom procedures or interferes with the orderly operation of the school.

**Due Date** – the date given by a teacher as the date when school assignments are to be turned in.

**Edgenuity** - is a K-12 online curriculum and blended learning solution resource that is utilized at PA Virtual as the main curriculum for grades 9-12 and for advanced grade 8 students. Usually referred to as Edgenuity or Imagine Edgenuity.

**English Learners (EL)** – formerly ELL – English Language Learners or ESL – English as a Second Language.

**Evaluation Report (ER)** – an initial evaluation report. The acronym used to refer to a multi-disciplinary evaluation report.

**Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).** Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires school districts to provide a “free appropriate public education” (FAPE) to each qualified person with a disability who is in the school district’s jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the person’s disability.

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)** – is federal legislation in the United States that protects the privacy of students' personally identifiable information (PII). The act applies to all educational institutions that receive federal funds.

**Fighting** - students are expected to refrain from physical confrontations. Each willing participant shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from school. Where it is determined that any student or students were not willingly involved in such fighting, only the responsible student(s) will be subject to discipline.

**Family Support Coordinator (FSC)** – Family Support Coordinator; school personnel assigned to each family to provide consistent one-on-one support throughout the school year. Parents or Learning Coaches may find their assigned FSC by logging in to Blackboard, navigate to and select the “Our Community” tab, then navigate to the “My Organization” section, scroll down until you find a clickable link with the individual designated as the FSC. By clicking the FSC’s name, you are then transported to a screen that includes additional contact information (name, telephone number, email address) for that FSC. Additional responsibilities of the FSC could be found in the Family Support section of this handbook.

**Harassment** – electronic, written, verbal, or physical act, or a series of acts of uninvited and unwelcome verbal or physical conduct, creating hostile environment while engaged in school programming or school-sponsored activities or at standardized testing locations during the school day.

**The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** – (relates to Special Education) – federal law that makes available a free appropriate public education to eligible children with disabilities and supports special education and related service programming to those children and youth.

**Individualized Education Plan (IEP)** – (relates to Special Education) – It is the plan that describes the program of a student identified as needing special services, typically outlined in a NOREP.

**Instructional Model** – guidelines or sets of strategies on which the approaches to teaching by instructors are based.

**Jigsaw** - web-enabled platform utilized by Grades K-8 PA Virtual teachers to conduct synchronous instruction.

**Late Assignment Submission** – submitting an assignment after the due date.

**Learning Coach (LC)** - primary responsible adult at home, who assists students in meeting school requirements. Learning coaches actively participate in their student’s education by partnering with teachers and support staff to ensure daily progress and academic achievement. Each student enrolled must have a primary responsible adult to support academic achievement.

**Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation Report** – also known as an Evaluation Report (ER) or Re-Evaluation Report (RR), is a report that includes formal (psychological evaluation, speech & language evaluation, occupational therapy evaluation, etc.) and informal (parent and teacher input, classroom observation, teacher recommendation, classroom performance, etc.) assessments conducted to determine if a student has a disability and requires, or is in need of, specially-designed instruction. Any one of the aforementioned formal evaluations, performed individually, or in conjunction with any other formal or informal assessment, would be considered a multidisciplinary evaluation.

**Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP)** – (relates to Special Education) - It is the written notice that the school must provide to parents when proposing to take a certain action concerning your child or refusing to take an action requested by a parent.

**Offensive Language** – language, either verbal or distributed through electronic means, which includes pictures and symbols that are vulgar, obscene, inappropriate, offensive, sexually-oriented, or threatening. Offensive language would include, but is not limited to: cursing, swearing and pictures and symbols of an offensive nature, as distributed and as described above.

**On-Line School (OLS)** – the digitized curriculum accessed by teachers and students to lessons and academic activities.

**Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE)** – The Pennsylvania Department of Education is the executive department of the state charged with publicly funded preschool, K-12 and adult educational budgeting,

management and guidelines. As the state education agency, its activities are directed by the governor appointed Pennsylvania's Secretary of Education.

**Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS)** – is the Pennsylvania Department of Education's statewide longitudinal data for recording student-level data reporting requirements and providing robust decision support tools. PIMS is based on open internet standards that enable sharing among diverse, otherwise incompatible systems and includes safeguards for data quality and security.

**Procedural Safeguards Notice (PSN)** - The Procedural Safeguards Notice includes a full explanation of all the federal (including IDEA) and state rights (including Chapter 711) rights available to parents of a child with a disability from ages 3-21 when their child has been referred for or is receiving special education services. The IDEA requires the cyber charter school to provide parents of a child with a disability with this notice containing a full explanation of the procedural safeguards available under the IDEA and the U.S. Department of Education regulations. A copy of this notice must be given to parents once a school year, or: (1) upon initial referral or parent request for evaluation; (2) upon filing by parents of their first State complaint and upon filing by parents of their first due process complaint in a school year; (3) when a decision is made to take a disciplinary action that constitutes a change of placement; and (4) upon parent request.

**Reckless Conduct** – students are not only responsible for harmful actions they intend, but they are also responsible for the reasonably foreseeable consequences of their reckless actions, especially those that risk serious injury, death, and/or serious property damage. A student may not act in a manner which ignores the health, safety, or welfare of any member of the school community by placing them in danger of injury or pain.

**Re-evaluation Report (RR)** – a re-evaluation report. The acronym used to refer to a multi-disciplinary evaluation report to consider if a Student continues to require school-age specially designed instruction through an IEP. The IDEA and state law, pursuant to Chapter 711, require RRs every three years for IDEA eligible students except for Intellectually Disabled students who are required to be fully reevaluated every two years

**Residency** – refers to a place where the custodial parent maintains a residence. Residency denotes full-time occupation of a dwelling in a particular geographic area (factual place of abode), i.e. geographic boundary of a school district.

**School District of Residence** – According to 24 P.S. §17-1703-A of the Pennsylvania Charter School Law and 24 P.S. §13-1302 of the Pennsylvania Public School Code, which is applicable to cyber charter schools, a child shall be considered a resident of the school district in which their parent(s) or guardian resides. In interpreting Section 1302, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court defined residence as “a factual place of abode evidenced by a person’s physical presence in a particular place.”

**Standards Based Educational System** – a PA Department of Education (“PDE”) mandated educational system where standards specify the learning goals and targets to be met by students by the end of the academic year.

**Student Assistance Program (SAP)** - The Pennsylvania Student Assistance Program (SAP) is a systematic team process used to mobilize school resources to remove barriers to learning. SAP is designed to assist in identifying issues including alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, and mental health issues which pose a barrier to a student’s success.

**Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP)** – The purpose of the SAIP is to discuss the cause(s) of truancy and to develop a mutually agreed upon plan to facilitate regular school attendance. The SAIP is developed cooperatively with involved stakeholders (student, parent, family support coordinator) through a school-family conference, which is required once a student has had three unexcused or unlawful absences.

**Service Animal** - Federal law defines one as any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition except for a miniature horse which has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with a disability.

1. The presence of the miniature horse does not compromise the safe operation of the facility.

**Synchronous Instruction** – also referred to as sync instruction, sync classes, or just sync, is learning in which students meet with their teachers and classmates, at a scheduled time, in a virtual classroom on the Blackboard Collaborate Ultra platform or Jigsaw. School staff typically refer to synchronous instruction as doing work in Collaborate, Ultra or Jigsaw. As opposed to asynchronous instruction, students participating in synchronous instruction are required to attend teacher-led classes online.

**Technology Resource(s)** – means technologies, devices, and resources used to access, store, or communicate information. This definition includes, but is not limited to: computers, information systems, networks, laptops, tablet devices, modems, printers, scanners, fax machines and transmissions, telephonic equipment, audiovisual equipment, digital cameras, e-readers (i.e. Kindles and Nooks), Internet, electronic mail, electronic communications devices and services, multimedia resources, hardware, and software.

**Theft of Property** – taking of another person's property without that person's consent.

**Virtual Education** – instruction in a learning environment where teacher and students are separated by time and/or space and the teacher provides course content through Information and Communication Technologies ("ICT") based methods such as Internet, multimedia resources, and videoconferencing.

## Section IV: Rights and Responsibilities

### Student Rights and Responsibilities

The following statements summarize student rights and responsibilities. They help explain the relationship between and among students at Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School. In exercising their rights, students shall not disrupt the educational process or deny others their rights.

#### Regarding Public Education

**RIGHT:** Students have the right to a public education, unimpaired because of gender, race, religion, national origin, medical condition, disability, parenthood, marital status, economic status, personal characteristics, or any reason not related to their individual capacities.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Students have the responsibility to avoid actions or activities, individually or in groups, which shall interfere with a person's access to a public education.

#### Regarding State Testing

**RIGHT:** During testing, students have the right to an orderly classroom environment that will provide optimum testing conditions.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Students have the responsibility to ensure that their actions do not disrupt the testing environment.

#### Regarding Freedom of Expression

**RIGHT:** Students have the right to express themselves in speech, writing, or symbolism within the boundaries of the law and policies of the school.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Students have the responsibility to ensure that such expression does not disrupt the educational process, present health or safety hazards, damage public property, infringe on the rights of others, or violate the law or school policies.

#### Regarding Possession and Distribution of Literature

**RIGHT:** Students have the right to possess and distribute literature including, but not limited to, newspapers, magazines, leaflets, and pamphlets within the law and school policies.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Students must ensure that distribution (or possession) of literature will not conflict with or infringe upon school activities, infringe on the rights of others, or contain religious, racial, or ethnic slurs. The material must comply with the policies of the school, which prohibits obscenity and harassment. The Chief Executive Officer shall determine the time, place, and manner of distribution.

## Regarding Religion

**RIGHT:** Students have the right to their own religious beliefs.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Students have the responsibility to ensure that in exercising their own religious freedom, they do not violate other students' constitutional rights to religious freedom.

## Regarding Privacy

**RIGHT:** At testing, educational outings, and school related activities, students have the right to protection from unlawful searches and seizures of their personal possession(s) or their person(s) without reasonable cause.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Students have the responsibility not to endanger themselves, other students, school personnel, or the general public by possessing material or objects which are potentially hazardous and/or prohibited by federal, state, or local law, or school policy.

From time to time, photographs or videos may be taken of your child for Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School public relations publications, professional development of staff, or other school related purposes. Additionally, your student's school-related work may be displayed in a school building in conjunction with displays of other students' work. These photographs, videos, and school-related work (which are not considered student records) will be used/displayed in a manner designed to ensure that confidential information about your student's educational program will not be revealed. If you object to the use of your child's photograph, the videotaping of your child for our professional development program, the posting of your child's name or image on our charter school website and/or social media, or the display of your student's work by the charter school in any manner, please contact your student's principal and inform any staff hosting outings or events that your student will be attending.

### *Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information*

Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information. Parents and guardians are allowed to review their student's permanent record or other educational records upon request. **Contact:** Student Records Department

### *Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School Parents and Students' Privacy Rights to Student Information and Education Records*

Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School is generally required to obtain parents/guardians' permission or consent before we may release any information from the student's education record. Under federal law, a student is vested with this right to approve or deny access to their education record when the student reaches the age of 18. This includes access to a student's records by others, as well as the right to deny parental access to their records. However please know that in the exception at (8) in 34 CFR sec. 99.31, it allows for parental access to student records if the student is 18 and is a dependent for federal tax purposes under the IRS rules.

For the most current directory information opt-out process and the complete definition of directory information, please refer to the Annual Notification of Rights under the Family Educational Rights and

Privacy Act (FERPA) to Parents and Guardians Regarding the Disclosure of Student “Directory Information” form, as posted on the [PA Virtual Public Notices and Information Webpage](#).

#### Notification of Rights under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment

Federal law affords Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School students and their parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection, use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams.

**Contact:** Student Records Department.

## Parent (Learning Coach) Rights and Responsibilities

The following statements summarize parent (learning coach) rights and responsibilities. The statements explain the relationship between parents (learning coaches) and the Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School. In exercising their rights, parents shall partner with the school to ensure their students achieve their full academic and social potential.

### Regarding Enrollment

**RIGHT:** Parents have the right to enroll their children in the Charter School, regardless of their district within Pennsylvania, the enrollment guidelines established by the PA Virtual Board of Trustees. Enrollment may not be denied on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Parents have the responsibility to ensure that their students log in to school and attend classes regularly, on time, and for the entire school day, in accordance with state law and the policies set forth by the Board of Trustees. This means, among other things, that parents have the responsibility of obtaining and maintaining a viable internet connection. Parents also have the responsibility to ensure that their students who are enrolled at PA Virtual are residents of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and maintain up to date contact information for themselves and their enrolled students, including emergency contact information.

#### *Pennsylvania Residency Requirements for Cyber-Charter School Students*

Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School, in accordance with the Pennsylvania Public School Code, provides education to students who are residents of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Charter School Law defines a student’s school district of residence as the school district in this Commonwealth in which the parents or guardians of a child reside. 24 P.S. §17-1703-A. Section 1302 of the Public School Code, which is applicable to cyber charter schools, provides that a child shall be considered a resident of the school district in which their parent(s) or guardian resides. 24 P.S. §13-1302(a). Therefore, the school district of residence of a student attending a cyber-charter school is the school district in the Commonwealth where the student’s parents or guardians have a factual place of abode, evidenced by their physical presence at that particular place. When a parent/guardian with a school-aged child or children enrolls a student in Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School, the parent/guardian must provide proof of residency. Examples of documents acceptable as proof of residency include:

1. Utility Bill (all pages, with service address, most recent - within 1 month)
2. Full Lease (all pages, with dates and signatures)
3. Property Deed; Full Mortgage; Mortgage Statement; Current Real Estate Tax Bill (for Property Address)
4. PA Driver’s License or PA State ID; Address Change Card with License/ID itself



## 5. Vehicle Registration with current insurance card

Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School requires parents/guardians to notify their assigned family support coordinator immediately if there is any change in residency or if their family is experiencing a housing hardship.

### *Change of Address*

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (“PDE”) requires that Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School maintains a current Charter School Student Enrollment Notification Form and proof of residency for all students. Completion of a new form is required if the family’s address information changes. This form must be submitted by Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School to the family’s local school district within 15 days of the address change. Once the Change of Address Notification Form is completed and returned, along with the corresponding proof of residency, the family’s address change will be considered complete.

- If you have moved or have changed your physical or mailing address, please contact your Family Support Coordinator to acquire a Charter School Student Change of Address Notification Form.

Documents can be faxed to 1-866-700-7140 or scanned and emailed to [coa@pavcsk12.org](mailto:coa@pavcsk12.org). Contact the Finance Department with any questions at 484-243-0000. Failure to submit the Charter School Student Change of Address Notification Form and required documentation will result in a delay of Internet Service Provider (“ISP”) reimbursement. In the event where PA residency cannot be verified, your student(s) could be removed from PA Virtual’s active rolls for not meeting state and school residency and enrollment requirements.

### *Demographic Data and Emergency Form*

Parents have a responsibility to ensure that all demographic information (names, addresses, phone numbers, gender, learning coaches, etc.) and emergency contact information is accurate and up-to-date. Please contact your Family Support Coordinator (FSC) for help with updating your demographic information and emergency contacts. Maintaining updated demographic and emergency information makes it easy for school personnel to contact the appropriate individuals in case of an emergency.

### *Updated Health Documents*

Parents have a responsibility to ensure that they provide PA Virtual with grade mandated forms including dental records, health physicals, health screenings and updated immunization records. All Pennsylvania school students must be fully compliant with immunizations school depending on the immunization, or risk exclusion (unable to attend) until compliant with immunizations.

### *Registration Intent for the Upcoming School Year*

Parents have a responsibility to ensure that they provide PA Virtual with their students’ registration intent for the upcoming school year. Toward the end of each school year PA Virtual will send parents a communication informing them of the start date and deadline for the re-registration process. Parents must indicate whether their child(ren) will be returning or withdrawing for the upcoming school year.

## **Regarding Student Academic Progress**

**RIGHT:** Parents have the right to receive regular official reports of their student’s academic progress through both written and oral communication.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Parents have the responsibility to assist the School and their students in achieving their academic potential, including serving as learning coach, or appointing a responsible adult to fulfill learning coach obligations, ensuring two-way communication with the school, planning a time and place for completing homework, ensuring the completion of assignments, and providing the necessary supervision while their students complete assignments. This responsibility is facilitated in large part by open and active, two-way communication with the school and takes on a variety of forms. One such form is via email and other electronic means. As such, parents are required to secure and maintain reliable, high-speed, internet service for the duration of their student's enrollment at PA Virtual.

## **Regarding Student Attendance**

Parents/guardians have the responsibility to ensure that their students are in attendance, according to their schedules, each school day. In most cases, parents/guardians serve as the learning coach. If they are not the learning coach, then it is the parent's responsibility to appoint a responsible adult to fulfill learning coach obligations. Learning Coaches actively participate in their student's education by partnering with teachers and support staff to ensure daily progress and academic achievement. Since learning coaches are with the students during the school day, they are a foundational element of the school's academic model and the student's academic success.

The Learning Coach is responsible for ensuring that:

1. Students log-in daily to the Learning Management System ("LMS"), commonly referred to as Blackboard. Logging in to Blackboard is considered Daily Attendance;
2. Students attend virtual classes (synchronous instruction). Attending virtual classes is considered Class Attendance;
3. Students log-in to the assigned curriculum provider and complete academic work as instructed (asynchronous instruction);
4. Students complete assignments as required;
5. Students submit assignments by their due dates;
6. Students maintain contact with their instructional team (teacher, Assistant Principal, Principal) and Family Support Coordinators (FSCs), as needed;
7. Learning Coaches attend teacher conferences, as needed;
8. Learning Coaches maintain contact with the instructional team (teacher, Assistant Principal, Principal) and Family Support Coordinators (FSCs) by communicating any issues or concerns and responding in a timely manner to any phone or email contact;
9. School-issued instructional materials, including laptops and textbooks, are used properly and returned in good condition, as directed by school administrators, as appropriate.

### ***Attendance Monitoring Responsibilities***

Parents/Learning Coaches are responsible for ensuring that students are present and attending school on a daily basis. To be considered "in attendance," at PA Virtual, parents and learning coaches must ensure two things occur:

1. Students log-in daily to Blackboard (daily attendance); logging in to Blackboard denotes that the student was present in school.
2. In addition, students scheduled for synchronous classes also have to attend their scheduled, teacher-led instructional classes (class attendance); attending synchronous class denotes that the student was present in class.

Additional information about the responsibilities regarding monitoring attendance can be found in the Academic Programs section of the Student Handbook below.

### Daily Attendance

Learning coaches/Parents/legal guardians are responsible for monitoring the student's daily attendance, which is recorded by logging into the Learning Management System (Backboard).

### Class Attendance

Students who are scheduled for synchronous instruction (real time, online teaching and learning) meet with their teachers and classmates in the virtual classroom called Collaborate Ultra or Jigsaw. These students will receive a class schedule and are expected to follow that schedule. Teachers and students interact by using emoticons, microphones, webcams, and other online tools. Parents ensure students have logged-in appropriately, attend synchronous classes as required, are engaged in learning, complete all academic assignments, and collaborate with teachers as necessary. When a student is absent from a synchronous class, the parent must notify the teacher of the class via the [Absence Form](#) or by email for the missed class within 3 school days. If a parent fails to notify the teacher of an absence within 3 school days, the absence will be recorded as unexcused.

### **Regarding State Testing**

All Parents/Learning Coaches are required to ensure that their students participate in state- and school-mandated testing and assessments. It is the responsibility of parents/learning coaches to ensure students are present at PSSA and Keystone test sites at the times assigned. State law provides for the right of any parent/guardian to excuse their child from the state assessment if, upon inspection of the testing- materials, parent/guardian finds the assessment to be in conflict with their religious beliefs.

### **Regarding Communication with Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School**

Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School supplies every parent one email account for the express purpose of facilitating two-way communication between the Parent/Guardian and the school. If the parent/guardian is not the Learning Coach, the parent must ensure that the Learning Coach has access to this account. Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School staff will communicate important information to this email account. The Learning Coach must agree to utilize this account to communicate with Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School staff.

### **Regarding Language Preference**

**RIGHT:** Parents have the right to receive any oral and written communication from the School in the language used by the family in the home. This right includes the right to have an interpreter present at any disciplinary proceedings that may involve their child or at an IEP Team Meeting or Section 504 Plan Meeting.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Parents have the responsibility to inform the School when they need to receive oral and written communications in a language other than English. This responsibility includes the responsibility to notify the School if an interpreter will be necessary at any disciplinary proceedings or other meetings that may involve their child.

## Regarding Enforcement of Policies and Procedures by PA Virtual

**RIGHT:** Parents have the right to ensure that the provisions of this Code are applied reasonably and fairly with respect to their child.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Parents have the responsibility to understand the rules set forth in this Code and to discuss expected behavior with their children, as well as to inform school administration and/or the Board of Trustees about their concerns regarding the application of this Code to their children.

## PA Virtual Rights and Responsibilities

The following statements summarize the school's rights and responsibilities. The statements help explain the relationship between students, parents (learning coaches), and the Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School. In exercising its rights, PA Virtual shall partner with students and parents (learning coaches) in their journey to fulfilling their students' full academic and social potential.

### Regarding Public Education

**RIGHT:** PA Virtual has the right to expect students and parents (learning coaches) to follow school policies intended to allow students to participate in a public education and achieve their full academic potential.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** It is PA Virtuals' responsibility to provide enrolled students a public education, as prescribed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and policies of the Board of Trustees, unimpaired because of gender, race, religion, national origin, medical condition, disability, parenthood, marital status, economic status, personal characteristics, or any reason not related to their individual capacities.

### Regarding Student Privacy

**RIGHT:** PA Virtual has the right to collect student data necessary to further student education and educational goals.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** It is PA Virtuals' responsibility to guard student data in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania related to student privacy, and all relevant Board of Trustees policies.

### Regarding Child Abuse Reporting

All Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School employees are mandated by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to report suspected child abuse. They are required to make a report when they have reason to suspect that a student is being physically abused, emotionally abused, neglected, or sexually abused. When teachers suspect child abuse, they are required to make reports of suspected abuse to the State Child Abuse Hotline ("ChildLine"). There is no law requiring parental notification of reports of suspected child

abuse. All school staff members are mandated to keep confidential any discussions regarding suspected child abuse.

### **Regarding Enforcement of School Policies and Procedures**

**RIGHT:** PA Virtual has the right to enforce federal and state educational laws and Board of Trustee policies intended to provide students a Free and Appropriate Public Education (“FAPE”).

**RESPONSIBILITY:** It is PA Virtuals’ responsibility to enforce provisions of the law and school policy in a reasonable and fair manner.

## **Section V: Academic Programs**

### **Standards Based Educational System**

The PA Department of Education (“PDE”) has mandated a standards based educational system, for public schools operating in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Standards are specific learning goals applied to all students which contain consistent targets for students to meet by the end of the year. They are the general categories that organize knowledge within a content area. Each local school district in Pennsylvania develops curriculum aligned to the PA Standards. At PA Virtual Charter School, the local curriculum meets or exceeds these standards in all areas. Both the PA standards and the district curriculum are reflected on the report cards.

### **Instructional Model**

The PA Virtual instructional model is designed to assist each student in reaching academic success. It approaches teaching and learning for each student by partnering with parents and students to determine how to best meet the needs of each and every student. The school’s academic program supports each student’s unique academic needs by combining the structure and flexibility they need with the support of PA-certified teachers, in age-appropriate learning communities.

The school incorporates three learning communities also known as schools: the elementary school, the middle school, and the high school. Each school community is led by a principal and multiple assistant principals. The school principals are the instructional leaders of their respective learning communities and ensure that the teachers in their charge partner with parents (learning coaches) to provide instruction to students.

Students access learning in one of two ways: by asynchronous or synchronous instructional method. Students in asynchronous classes have a customized schedule and learn in a self-directed environment, supervised by teachers, and supported by parents (learning coaches). Students in synchronous classes attend live classes directed by teachers. They join other students, across the Commonwealth, in a virtual classroom.

The virtual classroom is organized in an electronic platform, in Elementary and Middle School it is known as Jigsaw, while in High School it is known as Class. In synchronous classes, teachers and students interact by using emoticons, microphones, instant messaging, webcams, and other online tools.

The Learning Coach is expected to help monitor and support the academic progress of the student in the home learning environment, whether students participate in asynchronous or synchronous instruction. The Learning Coaches ensure students have logged-in appropriately to the online school, attend synchronous classes as required, are engaged in learning, complete all academic assignments, and collaborate with teachers as necessary.

The involvement and support of the Learning Coach varies based on the age and the need of the student and relies heavily on open lines of communication. Communication is essential for student success and occurs via phone calls, emails, podcasts, and videos. For open communication to occur, the communication loop needs to be kept open so Teachers communicate with Parents (Learning Coaches), Parents (Learning Coaches) with Teachers, Teachers with Students, and Students with Teachers.

### **Due Date Policy (Late Assignment and Assessment Submission)**

PA Virtual endeavors to have all students submit timely assignments and assessments as measures of growth and achievement on course standards and goals. Students are expected to submit assignments and assessments on or before teacher-directed due dates.

Assignments and assessments submitted **after** teacher-directed due dates:

- May, **at the teacher's discretion**, incur a 10% deduction in score after the assignment or assessment has been scored for accuracy.
- Will earn a zero (grade) if not submitted within 30 calendar days of the due date, **or** by the end of the quarter or semester, **whichever is earlier**.

PA Virtual recognizes that extenuating circumstances may result in students being unable to meet teacher-directed due dates. If students discover that they will be late in submitting an assignment or assessment, they should **request an extension of time** (assignment extension), **before** the due date, in order to avoid the possibility of incurring a 10% deduction in score. Assignment extensions are granted on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the teacher or when applicable, the IEP or Section 504 Plan.

To request an assignment extension, students must:

- Complete a specific Google form, provided by the grade or subject teacher(s), prior to the assignment or assessment due date.
- Submit the late assignment or assessment within 30 calendar days of the original due date or by the end of the quarter or semester, whichever is earlier.

**Please Note:** Late assignments or assessments that are not submitted within 30 calendar days of the original due date (or by the end of the quarter or semester) will incur a permanent grade of zero for each of the assignments or assessments not submitted. This includes assignments or assessments that were granted extensions.

## Attendance Policy

PA Virtual is responsible for enforcing the compulsory school attendance laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and for properly recording student attendance and maintaining student records. The PA Virtual Attendance policy is designed to promote maximum achievement, develop time management skills, and foster success in the online environment. To be considered “in attendance,” at PA Virtual, parents (learning coaches) have to ensure that students log-in daily to Blackboard (daily attendance). In addition, students attending synchronous classes also have to attend their scheduled, teacher-led instructional classes (class attendance).

### Daily Attendance

Daily attendance at Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School is required. Parents/legal guardians are to ensure that the attendance of the student(s) is recorded daily and that absences are communicated to the Family Support Coordinator (FSC) within three days of the absence. Three or more unexcused absences will result in the student being placed on an attendance improvement plan. Students are required to log into Blackboard daily for attendance and attend their synchronous class schedule (if applicable). The Learning Coach and Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School are responsible for ensuring that each student completes the mandated 900 hours of instruction for Kindergarten through sixth grade, and 990 hours of instruction for grades seven through twelve, per school year.

Compulsory Attendance			
Grade Level	School Days	Hours per day	Instructional Hours
Kindergarten–Sixth	180	5	900
Seventh–Twelfth	180	5.5	990

### Change of Location for Daily Instruction

We understand that throughout the course of the school year, families may need to travel outside of their resident school district for a variety of reasons. If the location of the daily instruction will change for more than five consecutive school days due to vacation, admission to a hospital, or other circumstances, the Learning Coach must notify the student’s Family Support Coordinator by phone or through their parent email account.

### Virtual Class Attendance

To be marked present in a class, students who are required to be in a virtual (synchronous) class session are required to be present and engaged for the entire class period, in an active and participatory manner. Students who are late to class will be marked as tardy, students who leave class prior to teacher dismissal will be marked as an early out, and students who do not attend at least half of the class will be marked as unexcused. All virtual classes are recorded and can be viewed anytime by the student or parent to review content or confirm student behavior. It is imperative that parents communicate absence excuses within three days of the occurrence. Students who accumulate unexcused class absences will participate in the school’s Academic Probation Process. The Academic Probation Process is intended to help students improve their class attendance as well as address any other issues related to academic non-compliance. If the provisions of the Academic Probation Process are not met, the student

could face disciplinary action as outlined in this handbook (see the Academic Probation section of this handbook).

### *Daily/Class Attendance Equivalence*

As stated previously, to be considered “in attendance” at PA Virtual, a student is required to log in to Blackboard (daily attendance) on a daily basis. In addition, students who attend classes synchronously (virtual) have the added requirement of attending and participating in scheduled virtual (synchronous) classes. Because students who attend virtual (synchronous) classes have the added requirement of logging in to their scheduled virtual (synchronous) class, to be considered “in attendance,” these students have to meet both requirements. Students who log in to Blackboard but neglect to attend their scheduled virtual (synchronous) class(es) will be in violation of the school’s daily attendance and truancy policy. Missing four (4) virtual (synchronous) classes on a school day will be equivalent to one (1) unexcused absence for daily attendance purposes.

### *Student Engagement in Synchronous Classes*

To be marked present in a class, students who are required to be in a virtual (synchronous) class session are required to be present and engaged for the entire class period, in an active and participatory manner. Students are responsible for coming to class ready to learn and engage in the learning process, meaning the students need to be actively engaged during class time. Students show active engagement by being ready for class, responding to their teacher when called upon, collaborating with their peers and completing all assigned school work during the entire duration of their synchronous classes. Students who are unresponsive to the classroom teacher will be prompted by the teacher in the following specific ways:

- The teachers will verbally prompt the student for a response. If no response, then,
- The teacher will request a student response through a personal chat. If no response, then,
- The teacher will move the student to a small group room and the teacher will post an announcement that instructs the student to move themselves back to the main group once they return to class.

Students will be provided a wait time to provide a response to the steps listed above. If a student does not respond to the prompts listed above, the teacher will mark the student as **unexcused** for that class period. Students who accumulate unexcused class absences will participate in the school’s Academic Probation Process. The Academic Probation Process is intended to help students improve their class attendance. If the provisions of the Academic Probation Process are not met, the student could face disciplinary action as outlined in this handbook (see the Academic Probation section of this handbook).

### **Process for Attendance Monitoring (Daily Attendance)**

Students are required to follow the school calendar, which includes at least 180 school days. Attendance only occurs on “school days” as listed on the school calendar. A student will need to log in to Blackboard each school day to be counted present. In addition, students attending synchronous classes have the additional responsibility of having to attend those classes to be counted as present.

### *Absence Notification*

If a student is ill and unable to log-in to Blackboard to attend school (also known as daily attendance), the parent or guardian must notify the Family Support Coordinator (FSC) or complete the [absence excuse form](#) located on the attendance website by no later than 8:30 AM. If a phone call has not been received,



Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School will notify the parent or guardian at 10:30 am and then again at 2:30 pm if an absence excuse has not been received. The Absence notification will come in the form of an automated call, a personal telephone call, a text message, and an email.

### Excused Absences

When a student misses school, the parent/guardian/learning coach needs to submit the absence excuse form. In cases where the parent/guardian/learning coach is unable to complete and submit this form, the parent/guardian/learning coach must notify their Family Support Coordinator (FSC) within three (3) school days. If a parent/guardian/learning coach fails to provide a valid excuse for the absence, the absence will be recorded as unexcused or unlawful. Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School recognizes the following as valid excuses for absence of a student from school, provided satisfactory evidence or documentation for the excuse is provided to the student's Family Support Coordinator (FSC) or absence notification form, which can be found via the link below:

#### Valid excuses for student absences are:

- *Death in the Immediate Family:* An absence resulting from the death of a member of the student's immediate family is excused. The immediate family of a student includes, but is not necessarily limited to, parent(s), grandparent(s), brother(s) and sister(s).
- *Medical or Dental Appointments:* An absence resulting from a medical or dental appointment that cannot be scheduled outside of regularly scheduled school hours. **Notice should be given to the Family Support Coordinator (FSC) at least 48 hours prior to the absence**, except in the case of emergency.
- *Illness or Injury:* An absence resulting from illness or injury which prevents the student from being physically able to attend school is excused. Any student missing three or more consecutive school days requires a note from a physician.
- *Quarantine:* An absence that is ordered by the local health office or by the State Board of Health is excused.
- *Family emergency-* family emergencies shall be strictly construed and do not permit irregular attendance.
- *Court or Administrative Proceedings:* An absence resulting from the attendance of a student at the proceedings of a court or an administrative tribunal if the student is a party to the action or under subpoena as a witness is excused.
- *Observance of a Religious Holiday:* An absence may be considered excused if the tenets of a religion, to which a student or their parent adhere, require observance of a religious event. The excusal shall be limited to a total of not more than 36 hours per school year.
- *Educational Opportunities or Family Educational Trips:* An absence may be excused when it is demonstrated that the purpose of the absence is to take advantage of a valid educational opportunity. **Approval for such an absence must be granted prior to the absence** in accordance with the Student Educational Leave of Absence policy.
- Recovery from an accident.
- College or postsecondary institution visit, with prior written approval from building principal or assistant principal/designee.

#### Please Note:

- A maximum of ten (10) days of absences verified by parental notification may be permitted during a school year. All absences beyond ten (10) cumulative days may require an excuse from a physician.

- If a student is absent for three (3) or more consecutive days due to illness, a physician's note is required.
- Students who are absent due to school-issued computer technical issues must contact Technical Support at (877) 883-3653 and troubleshoot the issue to receive a technical ticket number. The ticket number must be provided when submitting the excuse; otherwise, the absence is unexcused.

In the case of lost electricity or internet, if you cannot log into Blackboard by visiting a local library or borrowing a friend or family member's computer you must call your Family Support Coordinator (FSC) on that day and each day that you are unable to log in to capture your student's attendance. Your Family Support Coordinator (FSC) will contact the teachers and lessons will be provided offline. Not doing so will result in an unexcused or unlawful absence if the absence is not reported within three (3) days.

### Educational Trips

Students may be excused for educational trips not sponsored by the school according to 22 PA Code sec. 11.26. It shall be the applicant(s) responsibility to contact the appropriate building principal to determine what obligations must be met as a result of this proposed absence **prior to the trip**.

A student may receive approval to take two (2) educational trips per school year, with their parents/guardians, not to exceed a total of ten (10) school days. These trips must be *pre-approved* by the academic program principal. As used in this policy, the term "educational trip" shall refer to a trip in which the student is under the guidance and supervision of parents and/or guardians. In order to qualify as being educational, the trip must include activities in which the student is involved in learning experiences. Such activities include, but are not limited to: visiting museums, historical sites, zoos, galleries, laboratories, state or national parks, libraries, or an agricultural exhibit etc.

Educational trips will not be approved for the first and/or last ten (10) days of school, and during scheduled testing times (for state-mandated assessments – PSSA exams, Keystone exams; final exams). Educational trips will not be approved for students who are failing their subjects or have unexcused absences. Shopping trips and similar activities will not be approved as educational trips.

### **School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) and School-Family Conference**

The purpose of the School Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) is to discuss the cause(s) of truancy and to develop a mutually agreed upon plan to facilitate regular school attendance. The SAIP is developed cooperatively with involved stakeholders (student, parent, school personnel) through a school-family conference, which is required once a student has had three (3) unexcused or unlawful absences. Once three (3) unexcused or unlawful absences have accumulated, parents/guardians will be notified of the need to attend an SAIP conference. At this conference, issues limiting a student's ability to attend school will be discussed. Also discussed will be the appropriateness of the virtual model of education given the issues limiting a student's ability to attend school. At the end of the conference, a comprehensive SAIP will be developed and implemented, even if a parent/guardian refuses to attend the SAIP meeting.

## Academic Probation

As previously stated, in the Academic Model section of this handbook, PA Virtual's mission is to provide a system and structure for students to reach their full academic and social potential. This system is based on active student participation and active parent engagement. School attendance, and class attendance for students attending synchronous classes, is the first step of active student engagement. As noted in the Parent (Learning Coach) Rights and Responsibilities section of this handbook, parents and learning coaches have a responsibility to ensure that their children who are enrolled in the Charter School log in to school and attend classes regularly, on time, and for the entire school day in accordance with state law and the policies set forth by the Board of Trustees of PA Virtual. Students who violate the school's class attendance policies will be subject to the academic probation corrective actions outlined below.

Students who incur 1 – 3 unexcused class absences may face the following corrective actions:

- Class absence notification to parent email account.
- Teacher-parent conference.
- Teacher created weekly class attendance goals for student(s).
- Refer newly enrolled students to the new student orientation team for training and review of school and class attendance procedures and expectations.
- Refer re-enrolling students to their Family Support Coordinator (FSC) for review of school and class attendance expectations.
- Late penalties on assignments due on the day of an unexcused class absence.

Students who incur four (4) or more unexcused class absences may face the following corrective actions:

- Notice of academic probation status and implementation of academic probation improvement plan, which include all of the following interventions:
  - Weekly conference with family support coordinator
  - Reassignment from async classes to sync classes, or vice versa, in an effort to help student improve class attendance
  - Multiple Friday detention(s)
  - Home visit
  - Children and Youth Services referral after a SAIC is held and SAIP implemented.
  - Multiple mandatory Friday academic remediation sessions
  - Informal hearing with program administration representative and guidance counselor
- Students must demonstrate attendance improvement to successfully complete and exit their academic probationary period.

## Truancy

Act 138 of the Pennsylvania School Code stipulates that a child of compulsory school age is considered **truant** when the child has three (3) unexcused or unlawful absences during the school year. It is important to note that non-consecutive absences count. In other words, any three (3) unexcused absences, whether they happen consecutively or not, count for purposes of truancy. Each time a student is absent without excuse, the student's parent or guardian will receive a written notice of the unexcused absence. After three (3) unexcused or unlawful absences, PA Virtual will notify the parent or guardian in writing that the student is considered truant and will inform parents of the potential consequences if the student becomes habitually truant. The Family Support Coordinator assigned to the family will invite the parent and student to participate in a School

Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP) conference. The SAIP will be created regardless of parent participation, but the best outcomes can be achieved when the family and school work together and collaboratively.

Act 138 of Pennsylvania law states that a child of compulsory school age is considered **habitually truant** when the student has six (6) unexcused or unlawful absences during the school year. For purposes of truancy, unlawful absences, whether they happen consecutively or not, count towards such total. Once a student has been found to be habitually truant, PA Virtual will issue Friday detention to the student and Pennsylvania law requires the school to inform the student's local county children and youth services of the student's habitually truant status or refer the student to a school-based or community-based attendance improvement program. If referred, the local county and youth services (CYS) agency will conduct an investigation of the habitual truancy and will work with the family to re-engage the student in school. If the CYS case closes and unexcused or unlawful absences continue to occur, Act 138 allows PA Virtual to report the habitually truant student and/or student's parent to the student's resident magistrate. The magistrate may take the following actions:

*Court Penalties may include:*

- Every parent, guardian, or person in parental relation, having control or charge of any child or children of compulsory school age, or the child of compulsory school age him/herself above 15 years of age who shall fail to comply with the provisions of Act 138 regarding compulsory attendance, shall on summary conviction thereof, be sentenced to pay a fine, not exceeding three hundred dollars (\$300) for a first offense and to pay court costs or be sentenced to complete a parenting education program offered and operated by a local school district, and, in default of the payment of such fine and costs or completion of the parenting program by the person so offending, shall be sentenced to the county jail for a period not exceeding three (3) days.
- In lieu of or in addition to any other sentence imposed under this section, the district justice may order the parent, guardian, or person in parental relation to perform community service.
- Driving Privileges: If a child is convicted of a violation of the compulsory school attendance requirements, the court may send the Department of Transportation a certified record of the conviction.
  - The Department of Transportation shall suspend for ninety (90) days the operating privilege of a child upon receiving a certified record that the child was convicted of a summary offense under the compulsory school attendance requirements of this article. If the Department of Transportation receives a certified record of a second or subsequent conviction of a child pursuant to this section, the department shall suspend the child's operating privilege for six (6) months.
  - A child whose record is received by the Department of Transportation under this section and who does not have a driver's license shall be ineligible to apply for a driver's license for the time period specified in section A. If the child is under sixteen (16) years of age when convicted, suspension of operating privileges shall commence for the time specified in paragraph (A).

A student who acquires ten (10) consecutive unexcused/unlawful daily absences will be withdrawn from PA Virtual, except in the case of exceptions as stated in 22 Pa Code §11.24. If the student is within the compulsory age, PA Virtual will open a case with the student's local county children and youth services. Act 138 requires unexcused and unlawful absences to be reported directly to the student's district of residence. .

## Elementary School Program Overview (Grades K-4)

The elementary school establishes the educational foundation for young learners. At this stage of their educational journey, students begin to learn how to think critically, problem - solve, and manage their learning time; all skills that will help foster future academic success. Students attending grades Kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> grade are scheduled to take the following subjects:

- **English Language Arts** – organized to provide grade and age-appropriate skill in reading comprehension, critical reading and analysis, composition, vocabulary, grammar, usage, and mechanics. Students will experience a broad range of instructional approaches that are part of a comprehensive literacy framework. The components include reading and writing aloud, shared reading and writing, guided reading and writing, independent reading and writing, and word study.
- **Math** – organized to provide grade and age-appropriate skill in computational fluency, conceptual understanding, and mathematical problem-solving.
- **Science** – organized to provide grade and age-appropriate scientific reasoning skills, students learn to observe and analyze through hands-on experiments, and gain further insight into how science helps us understand our world.
- **History** – organized to provide grade and age-appropriate skill in the study of past human events, students learn about the Stone Age through to the Space Age and everything in between.
- **Art** – organized to provide grade and age-appropriate skill in great works of art from different cultures and eras, while engaging students in creative artistic activity. Students learn the elements of art; study important paintings, sculpture, and architecture.
- **Music** – organized to provide grade and age-appropriate music skill, students learn concepts related to music appreciation, music history, music culture, music theory, improvisational skills, compositional skills, ear training, and performance.
- **Physical Education** – organized to provide grade and age-appropriate skill in the development and care of the body.
- **Career Education** – organized to provide grade and age-appropriate skill development in career pathways and exploration.

## Elementary School Student Progress and the Curriculum

- Grades are available in the Sapphire Community Portal and in the Blackboard course module.
- Individual assignment details can be found in Blackboard.
- Progress reports are provided two (2) times per year for all students.
- Parent-teacher conferences take place, minimally, two (2) times per year for all students.  
Additional conferences may be requested at the teacher's or parent discretion.
- Grade level standards, prescribed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, can be found at [www.pdesas.org](http://www.pdesas.org).
- Teacher Blackboard Learn pages provide additional resources and links.
  - PA Virtual staff and teachers present various ways parents can work with students at home to meet or exceed academic standards.

## Elementary School Grading and Promotion

Parents are provided a list of skills related to grade level standards that students will strive to accomplish to show academic progress for the school year. Student academic progress will be communicated to parents two (2) times per year (once, per semester). For all elementary students, report cards focus on skill acquisition in Language Arts and Math, Science, History, Art, Music and Physical Education. Letter grades indicate mastery of those skills and are shared in January.

## Elementary School Enrichment and Support

PA Virtual students have the opportunity to move through the curriculum at a pace that is challenging and motivating, based upon the students' abilities. Together, the student, parent, and teacher(s) create a learning path that stretches the student's academic abilities with flexible, individualized learning approaches and engaging enrichment opportunities that may be obtained from optional lessons in the OLS. Learners are provided with a broad selection of rigorous coursework in various subject areas. Students may be provided with additional support to close the gap between their academic performance and potential. To accomplish this, teachers work with students to address their literacy and/or math skills. Daily math and reading academic sessions are provided synchronously for students who qualify.

## Elementary School Grading Scale

For each reporting period, students are evaluated in language arts, mathematics, science, history, art, music, and physical education.

Report cards for Elementary School students include a list of the courses taken, in language arts, mathematics, science, and history, the grade for that course following the scale below:

Grade	Percent	Grade	Percent
A	100-95	C+	79-77
A-	94-90	C	76-73
B+	89-87	C-	72-70
B	86-83	D	69-65
B-	82-80	F	64-0

For each reporting period, when students are evaluated in art, music, career, and physical education, they receive a grade following the scale below:

Grade	Percent F
P	100-65
F	64-0

Parents/learning coaches/guardians should contact the Elementary School's principal with any questions they may have or additional details they would like regarding the Elementary School's curriculum, grading procedures, promotion, and academic support.

## Elementary School Leadership & Administration

Name	Position	Email
Steve Schutt	Elementary School Principal	sschutt@pavcsk12.org
Christine Adams	Kindergarten & 1st Grade Assistant Principal	cadams@pavcsk12.org
Emily Sullivan	2nd & 3rd Grade Assistant Principal	esullivan@pavcsk12.org
Chistine Gallagher	4th Grade & Academic Support Assistant Principal	cgallagher@pavcsk12.org
Jennifer Guerra	Program Specialist	jguerra@pavcsk12.org

## Middle School Program Overview (Grades 5-8)

The middle school continues to build on the educational foundation of students. At this stage of their educational journey, students continue to hone their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. It is at this stage when students become more independent and begin to actively manage their learning time, skills that will support future academic success. Students attending grades 5 through 8 are scheduled to take the following subjects:

- **English Language Arts** – organized to provide grade and age-appropriate skill in the essential building blocks of self-expression (students' own ideas) in formal English. Students engage in literary analysis of short stories, poetry, drama, novels, and nonfiction.
- **Math** – organized to provide grade and age-appropriate skill in computational fluency, conceptual understanding, and mathematical problem-solving. It expands more deeply into concepts of geometry, algebra, and statistics, including an understanding of operations with rational numbers, and skills needed to solve equations and perform manipulations with numbers, variables, equations, and inequalities.
- **Science** – organized to provide grade and age-appropriate scientific reasoning skills, as related to the study of earth, life, and the physical sciences. Students learn about geological history, landforms around the globe, the nature of the sea and air, and the newest discoveries about our universe. They also learn to investigate the world of living things and the fundamentals of physics and chemistry.
- **American & World History** – organized to provide grade and age-appropriate skill in the study of the United States, from the westward movement of the late 1800s to the present, and the study of human past from the period before written records, through 1917 and the beginning of World War I.
- **American & World Art** – organized to provide grade and age-appropriate skill in the artists, cultures, and great works of art and architecture of North America, from the end of the Civil War through

modern times. It also introduces students to the artists, cultures, and great works of world art from ancient times, through the Renaissance, all the way up to modern times.

- **Music** – organized to provide grade and age-appropriate music skill, students learn concepts related to singing, dancing, virtual instruments, listening maps, authentic sound recordings, and playing the recorder.
- **Health & Physical Education** – organized to provide grade and age-appropriate skill in the development and care of the body.
- **Career Education** – organized to provide grade and age-appropriate skill development in career pathways and exploration, as required by Chapter 4 of the PA School Code.
- **Family & Consumer Science (7th grade)** - organized to provide grade and age-appropriate skills for independent or family living.
- **Business Computer & Information Technology (8th grade)** - organized to provide grade and age-appropriate skills such as budgeting, entrepreneurship, digital citizenship, and the basics of information technology
- **Applied Classes** – organized to provide grade and age-appropriate skill development through the review of eligible content concepts covered in core academic courses.

### Middle School Grading and Promotion

For each reporting period, students are evaluated in language arts, mathematics, science, history, art, music and physical education. Report cards for Middle School students include a list of the courses taken and for each course they receive a grade following the scale below.

Grade	Percent	Grade	Percent
A	100-95	C+	79-77
A-	94-90	C	76-73
B+	89-87	C-	72-70
B	86-83	D	69-65
B-	82-80	F	64-0

### Middle School Academic Support & Enrichment

PA Virtual students have the opportunity to move through the curriculum at a pace that is challenging and motivating. Together, the student, parent/learning coach, and teachers create a learning plan which is designed to engage and challenge students in their approach to problem-solving and provide academic enrichment opportunities. Students may be provided with additional support to close the gap between their academic performance and potential. To accomplish this, teachers work with students to address their literacy and/or math skills. Supplemental math and reading academic sessions are provided synchronously for students who qualify.

### Middle School Academic Honors Program

The Middle School Honors Program is designed to encourage and support outstanding students who display exceptional academic ability and desire rigorous learning opportunities. While all PA Virtual courses meet PA Core eligible content and standards, the courses are designed to prepare students for higher education. The Honors Program courses in Science, Math, History, and ELA, delve deeper into the content at a more rapid



pace and have elevated expectations for both quality and quantity of student work. These courses are more rigorous and stretch student learning above and beyond what is typically expected at grade-level. Students participating in the Middle School Honors Program may be required to complete additional reading, research, writing, and individual/collaborative projects. Teachers deliver instruction and curriculum at a faster pace and in greater detail while incorporating more complex analysis and additional resources.

All Honors courses are taught with the Edgenuity curriculum. Students enrolled in the Honors program do not have access to the K12 Online School. Students enrolled in the Honors program must take all Honors courses for their core subjects – Math, ELA, Science, and History.

**Eligibility:**

- Current PA Virtual Students
  - Must demonstrate high academic achievement in the prior courses for which they request/are recommended honors.
  - Must have a score of 90% or above in the previous year's courses
  - Must be recommended for the honors program by the previous year's teacher(s)
  - Must demonstrate measurable success on IXL/NWEA MAP Diagnostic Exam
- Incoming students from other educational placements may be enrolled in honors courses based on the following:
  - A score of 90% or above in the previous year's courses.
  - Learning coach request supported by transcript documentation, as outlined above.

### **Junior National Honor Society**

The National Junior Honor Society chapter at Pennsylvania Virtual establishes rules for membership that are based upon a student's outstanding performance in the areas of scholarship, service, leadership, citizenship, and character. These five criteria for selection form the foundation upon which the organization and its activities are built. Students in grades seven and eight who meet the outlined criteria are encouraged to apply during the application period.

Parents/learning coaches/guardians should contact the Middle School's principal with any questions or for additional details regarding the Middle School's curriculum, grading procedures, promotion, and academic support.

## **High School Program Overview (Grades 9-12)**

The high school continues the development of students in preparation for their journey to employment and post-secondary education. In grades 9 through 12, students utilize the Edgenuity curriculum, supplemented by teacher-created plans, Edmentum, Study Island, and more to learn advanced academic material and gain experience in subjects of interest by selecting from a list of available elective courses. The academic year runs on a traditional year-long schedule separated into two (2) semesters, each lasting approximately eighteen (18) weeks. Semesters are further divided into quarters, lasting approximately nine (9) weeks. Throughout the year, students and learning coaches have continuous access to updated course averages via Sapphire's Community Portal. To graduate, students must fulfill the PA Department of Education's Act 158 Graduation Requirements, which includes taking the Keystone Exams (Algebra,

Language Arts, Biology). For students graduating in 2023 and beyond, four (4) pathways exist for meeting state high school graduation requirements, the most direct being taking and passing the three required Keystone exams. PA Virtual graduate candidates must also complete and present a Capstone Graduation Project to a panel of PA Virtual staff. The list below reflects the minimum number of credits to be achieved in the subject as required for graduation.

English	Math	History / Social Studies	Science	Career	Humanities / Fine Arts	Physical Education	Health	Electives / Enrichment
4	4	3	3	1	2	1	.5	2.5

### Grading and Promotion

The grade scale, below, reflects a weighted GPA for regular courses as well as Honors and AP courses:

Grade	Number Range	Regular Courses (4.0 scale)	AP/ Honors Courses (5.0 scale)
A	100-95	4	5
A-	94-90	3.67	4.67
B+	89-87	3.33	4.33
B	86-83	3	4
B-	82-80	2.67	3.67
C+	79-77	2.33	3.33
C	76-73	2	3
C-	72-70	1.67	2.67
D	69-65	1	2
F	64-0	0	0

### High School Enrichment and Support

High School students begin their 9th-grade year with a schedule of core courses designed to suit their academic needs. Based on CDT results (which are diagnostic tests developed by the PA Department of Education), 8th-grade achievement, and parent/teacher recommendations, School Counselors create individualized learning paths designed to engage and challenge students in both core subject areas and electives. Students are provided with remediation and support as needed within synchronous English, Math, and Science courses, Keystone preparation courses, and individual or group academic support sessions. Additionally, Keystone trigger courses (Algebra 1B, English 10, and Biology) are supported by pre-trigger courses, Algebra 1A, Literacy Skills, and Environmental Science, in which students practice crucial skills required to be successful in the courses leading to the Keystone exams.

## Special Academic Programs

### *High School Honors Program*

The High School Program is designed to encourage and support outstanding students who display exceptional academic ability and desire advanced learning opportunities. While all PA Virtual courses meet PA Core Standards/Eligible Content and are designed to prepare students for higher education, Honors Program courses in Science, Math, History, and ELA delve deeper into the content at a more rapid pace and have elevated expectations for both quality and quantity of student work. These courses are more rigorous and stretch student learning above and beyond grade-level. Students participating in the High School Honors Program may be required to complete additional reading, research, writing, and individual/collaborative projects. Teachers deliver instruction and curriculum at a faster pace and in greater detail while incorporating more complex analysis and additional resources.

Eligibility:

Current PA Virtual Students:

- Must demonstrate high academic achievement in the prior course for which they request/are recommended honors, scoring a 90% or above.
- Must be recommended by the prior course teacher.
- Must demonstrate measurable success on diagnostic tests.

Incoming students from other educational placements may be enrolled in honors courses based on the following:

- A score of 90% or above in the previous year's course.
- Learning coach request supported by transcript documentation.

PA Virtual's Honors Program is augmented by the establishment of subject-specific, local chapters of the following National Honors Societies:

- National English Honor Society <https://www.nehs.us/about/constitution.shtml#1>
- Science National Honor Society <https://www.sciencenhs.org/faq>
- Rho Kappa National Social Studies Honor Society  
<https://www.socialstudies.org/rho-kappa-chapter-advisor-handbook/selecting-student-members>
- Mu Alpha Theta National Math Honor Society  
[https://mualphatheta.org/virtual\\_high\\_school](https://mualphatheta.org/virtual_high_school)

These honor societies all require students to be enrolled in an accelerated course within the specific subject, to maintain a certain average in the course, and to maintain a certain minimum overall GPA within the course. Each honor society chapter has varied and specific requirements unique to the subject, which can be found on the provided web links above. Teacher advisors are responsible for maintaining and renewing PA Virtual's local chapters and monitoring student compliance with national and charter/chapter bylaws.

Qualifying students in honors courses are invited by advisors to apply to the local chapters of the subject-specific national honor societies, based on each society's specific standards. Accepted members

attend chapter meetings, hold elections for student leadership teams, discuss national bylaws and create original bylaws of the local chapter, set goals for implementation of upcoming service and enrichment opportunities, and engage in a variety of school and community-based initiatives.

For more information about the High School Honors Program contact the High School Administrative Team or a School Counselor.

### ***National Honor Society***

Students in grades ten (10) through twelve (12) who have a 3.5 minimum GPA will be contacted by the PA Virtual NHS sponsor with details about applying to join the National Honor Society (“NHS”). Students in the NHS are expected to display excellence in the areas of scholarship, leadership, service, and character. To find out more about the National Honor Society, go to [www.NHS.us](http://www.NHS.us).

### ***High School Advanced Placement (AP) Courses***

Students have an opportunity to explore college-level curricula through the high school’s Advanced Placement course offerings. AP courses, offered at the high school level, include English, Math, Science, and History. In order to qualify to take an AP course, students must have a grade of 90% or higher in the relevant subject course and a teacher recommendation. One of the benefits of taking AP courses for students who qualify is the ability to earn college level credit. For more information about the AP program, contact the High School Administrative Team or a School Counselor.

### ***Honor Roll***

Students are recognized at the end of each school year for strong academic performance in all of their scheduled courses.

- **Distinguished Honor Roll:** To be recognized for the Distinguished Honor Roll, a student must have a GPA at or above 4.0 or higher.
- **Principal’s Honor Roll:** To be recognized for the Principal Honor Roll, a student must have a GPA of 3.5 or above.
- **Honor Roll:** To be recognized for the Honor Roll, a student must have a GPA of 3.0 or above.

### ***Career Exploration***

PA Virtual’s Career Exploration program provides students with access to enhanced career exploration activities under the supervision of Career Educators. Students begin in 9th grade with the Digital Citizenship and Career Exploration course, which lays the foundation for students to begin exploring their career and college-related options and interests. In 10th grade, students are enrolled in the Reaching Your Academic Potential course. Among other things, this course introduces students to goal setting necessary for college and career success and serves as a practical transition to the 11th grade course, College and Career Goals. Here, students’ career exploration is greatly expanded. Students are able to learn more about military and public service career options, participate in a virtual career day, and engage in job search processes that could potentially lead to an internship, apprenticeship, or outright job placement. Alternatively, students may engage in a job-related, independent study program. The Career Exploration program concludes with the 12th-grade Capstone Graduation Project, which is the culminating activity that enables students to reflect on and document their high school career exploration journey.

### ***Independent Study***

The Independent Study Program is designed for seniors or other graduation candidates who have exhausted available course offerings or who demonstrate a specific need for Independent Study.

It allows eligible students to select and study a topic to strengthen a college application, prepare for a future job, delve into a strong personal interest that is aligned to appropriate/relevant academic standard(s) as identified in the program application and final reflection, or leverage gainful employment as a learning opportunity. Independent Study allows students to emphasize their interests, aptitudes, and abilities via compliance with the Board of Trustees policies and permits students to learn in diverse educational settings.

The successful completion of an Independent Study results in credit toward graduation. However, as Pennsylvania law dictates, Independent Study alone does not qualify a student for full-time enrollment status. In other words, independent study programs in Pennsylvania are not a full-time option, nor do such programs override compulsory attendance requirements. The number of credits assigned to an independent study course is determined by PA Virtual Administration and is based on the nature and scope of the planned work.

The ideal applicant is a self-directed learner who expects to meet all stated outcomes with limited supervision.

Additional eligibility requirements include:

- Students must be enrolled in PA Virtual for a minimum of one semester prior to beginning the Independent Study.
- Students must maintain their status as full-time students at PA Virtual while completing the Independent Study.
- Students will not be considered for the Independent Study program if they are on Academic Probation.

Interested students may complete the Independent Study Application form with assistance from their Guidance Counselor. In addition to an On-Site Supervisor for Independent Study, a credentialed PA Virtual staff member will be assigned as a teacher mentor to support the student with regular advising meetings. Students engaged in independent study have access to the existing services, resources, and academic rights and privileges, similar to other students.

### ***High School Early Graduation***

The Early Graduation program allows current high-performing students to pursue a high school diploma in three (3) years. This pathway of early graduation must satisfy the requirements set forth by the Pennsylvania Department of Education under Act 158 and PA Virtual requirements.

To qualify, a student:

- Must remain in good standing in all PA Virtual courses and maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- Must have completed a minimum of 14 credits by the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Must score Advanced or Proficient on the Literature, Algebra, and Biology Keystone Exams by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of their junior year.

- Must submit a written statement that clearly outlines postsecondary plans and the steps taken to achieve them. Each proposal may have additional criteria required for approval. For example, college-bound applicants must present evidence of SAT/ACT registration and prospective college searches.
- Must obtain two (2) academic recommendations, preferably in English and Math.
- Must submit 11th-grade mandated physician physical examination to the Pupil Health Department by January 1st of their graduation year.
- Must submit a parent and student signature on the early graduation application.
- Must meet High School College and Career requirements, including completing the Capstone Graduation Project.

Students interested in early graduation should contact their School Counselor for application details.

Parents/learning coaches/guardians should contact the High School's Administrative Team with questions or for additional details regarding the High School's course catalog, curriculum, grading procedures, promotion, and academic support.

## Special Education - Grades K-12

Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School is committed to ensuring a passion for lifelong learning one student at a time, regardless of a student's innate abilities.

PA Virtual believes that all students can and must have an opportunity to reach their potential. It is our intent to take the necessary measures including specialized programming, services, and supports to help students achieve their academic potential, with respect to their ability. Certified special education staff, counselors, related service providers, and psychologists will provide ongoing support to students identified as requiring special education services. The PA Virtual special education program complies with federal and state special education laws.

### Child Find

Child Find is the continuous process of identifying and evaluating all children with disabilities who are in need of special education and related services, as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 ("IDEA"). Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School will ensure that children with disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disabilities, who are enrolled at Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School and in need of special education and related services, are located, identified, and evaluated. Child Find ensures that children who are thought to be eligible to receive special education services and related services are appropriately evaluated, identified, and offered appropriate educational services and programs.

Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School is responsible for publicly notifying parents, other caregivers, and the community at large of their rights, including the types of disabilities that might qualify a child for special education, the special education programs and services available, the process by which Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School screens and evaluates students for eligibility, the special rights that pertain to such children and their parents or legal guardians, and the confidentiality rights pertaining to student information. To fulfill its duties, Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School publishes its Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs and Rights for Students with Disabilities and Notification of Rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and The Child Find Notice.

### IDEA Statement

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") is the federal law that makes available a free appropriate public education to eligible children with disabilities and supports special education and related service programming to those children and youth.

Pennsylvania Virtual shall provide an eligible child and their parent/guardian with safeguards, as required by applicable law which can be reviewed at this link:

<https://www.pattan.net/Publications/Parents-Rights-Understanding-the-Procedural-Safegu>

PA Virtual believes students with Individualized Education Plans ("IEPs") can achieve successes based on high standards when provided the necessary supports as outlined in their IEPs. Any child suspected of having a disability and in need of special education should be referred to the school's Principal or Special Education Department.

## Identification for Special Education Services

PA Virtual identifies and refers students who may be eligible for Special Education Services for evaluation. Screening and referral processes are integrated into our Multi-Tier System of Supports (“MTSS”), which include academic placement tests, standardized reading and mathematics assessments, classroom performance, and benchmark examinations. If you think that your student may be eligible for Special Education Services, please contact your principal or the school’s Special Education department to discuss your concerns. PA Virtual Charter School must obtain written consent from a parent or guardian before such an evaluation may be conducted. Please note, if you consent to the evaluation of your student, you are agreeing to an evaluation of your student’s eligibility for services, which is not a guarantee that your student will be deemed eligible to receive special education services.

In order to determine if a student is in need of special education, a student undergoes a multidisciplinary evaluation. A multi-disciplinary evaluation is only conducted if a parent provides consent also known as Permission to Evaluate (PTE). The multi-disciplinary evaluation will occur within sixty (60) calendar days after PA Virtual receives the signed PTE and culminates in a multidisciplinary evaluation report (ER). However, there is an exception for the summer break during which time the sixty calendar day period does not apply. Once the ER is completed, if a student is found eligible for special education, that student’s parent/guardian will be contacted to discuss the results of the evaluation and will be invited to attend a meeting to develop an IEP.

If a student is identified to require special education, PA Virtual will provide programming and services based upon the student’s disability and need for special education and related services, as specified in the IEP. Students are eligible for special education and/or related services if they are in need of specially designed instruction and satisfy the criteria for one of the following disability categories as defined under IDEA:

- Autism
- Deaf-Blindness
- Deafness
- Emotional Disturbance
- Hearing Impaired
- Intellectual Disability
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impaired
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment, including Blindness

## *Individualized Education Plan (IEP)*

If your student is identified to require Special Education Services, you will be invited to attend a meeting to assist in developing an IEP for your student. The IEP meeting will take place within thirty (30) calendar days of dissemination of the evaluation report (ER). The IEP will detail the special education, related services, specially designed instruction, accommodations or modifications, and other supports your student needs to achieve academic, social and behavior progress. The IEP is a living document and can be amended at any time in order to consistently reflect the needs of the student. Either a parent or the school staff can initiate the process for reconvening the IEP team.



Parents and guardians are important and valued members of the IEP team. Your input allows the team to develop an IEP that will meet your student's individual academic and/or social-emotional needs. When your student turns fourteen (14) years of age within an IEP term, they will be invited to the IEP meeting to discuss post-secondary goals and transition needs.

After the IEP meeting, parents and/or guardians will be sent the Notice of Recommended Educational Placement/Prior Written Notice (NOREP/PWN). By signing this document, you indicate your approval of the proposed program and services. A Procedural Safeguards Notice will be provided at least once annually to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the eligible student.

### ***Special Education Services***

After the NOREP is signed indicating approval of proposed services, your student will begin receiving the services as outlined in the IEP. Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School uses data to monitor the academic growth of students with IEPs and to track each student's progress towards meeting IEP goals.

### ***Transition Planning***

Students identified with a disability who have an IEP receive transition planning commencing at the age of fourteen (14). Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School provides transition planning services to all special education students at the age of fourteen. Transition planning involves identifying the student's post-secondary goals in the areas of post-secondary training, employment, and independent living. Such transition planning may include linking students to outside agencies and supporting students and families with the identification of post-secondary opportunities.

## **Specialized Programs Overview (Grades K-12)**

### **New Student Onboarding & Orientation**

New student onboarding and orientation will enable all new families and students to successfully transition into the virtual, on-line learning model. PA Virtual's comprehensive onboarding program is a two-week exercise intended to help parents and students learn how to get the most of their online learning experience. The first week of new student orientation is an introduction to the school's organizational composition and learning platforms. During the first week, parents and students learn about the origins of the school, its governance structure, and the various tools and platforms students will use while learning online. The second week of orientation is reserved for "hands-on" learning. Using the school-provided laptop, parents and students begin to practice what they learned during week one of orientation. This process serves to provide a strong foundation for new families in PA Virtual's on-line educational model and is structured to provide ongoing support to ensure a successful transition to virtual learning. The two weeks of orientation require both the student and the learning coach attendance. The sessions for both weeks are synchronous (real-time in a virtual classroom).

### **English Learners (ELs)**

Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School will provide students who are English Learners (ELs) with English language instruction by a qualified ESL Education Teacher. The goal of the EL program is the attainment of English language proficiency so that students will be successful in their classes.

Families who are new to Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School will be asked to complete a Home Language Survey as part of the application process. Information from the survey along with a family interview and previous school records will be used as a preliminary screening tool to determine whether a student should

take a language proficiency assessment. The results of this assessment will be used to determine a student's eligibility for EL services. In addition to providing EL services to students, Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School, through local Intermediate Unit support, can provide interpreters for parent/teacher conferences and other school-related activities. For more information on Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School's EL program, please contact your principal. You can review Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School's EL policy on our website and/or request a copy from your Principal.

### **The Student Assistance Program (SAP)**

The Student Assistance Program (SAP) is one of the available supports Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School provides to students. SAP is designed to assist school personnel in identifying student needs such as mental health issues, alcohol, tobacco, or other drug use, which may pose barriers to a student's success. The primary goal of SAP is to link students with the help they need in order to overcome barriers so that they can remain in school, succeed academically, and work towards graduation and post-secondary success. SAP team members do not diagnose or treat students. However, SAP teams may make referrals to outside or community agencies and may also refer students for an assessment for treatment to the SAP Assessor (who works for a community agency). These types of referrals take place when the team believes that the supports needed by the student are beyond the scope of services that Pennsylvania Virtual provides. It is the parents or guardians' right to be involved in the SAP process.

### **Section 504**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was established to provide accommodations for students who have been determined to have a disability which substantially limits a major life activity. A student may be found eligible for a 504 Accommodation Plan if the disability poses a barrier to fully accessing Student's educational program. To determine eligibility for Section 504 services and protections, the 504 team convenes a meeting with the parent/guardian to review medical and academic documentation and assess the impact the disability has on the student's academic progress. Evaluations are conducted when needed to assist the 504 Plan team with appropriate next steps and programming recommendations.

### **Student Clubs and Activities**

PA Virtual offers opportunities for all students to participate in the activities of their choice as an integral part of their total school program. Club experiences are designed to help satisfy the recreational, social, and extended academic needs and interests of all students.

PA Virtual believes that the opportunity for participation in a variety of student-selected activities is a vital part of the students' educational experience. Such participation is a privilege that carries with it responsibilities to the school, activity, student body, community, and students themselves. For more information on joining or starting a club, please visit the [website](#).

### **Extracurricular Activities**

The Pennsylvania Charter School law, known as Act 22 of 1997, and specifically 24 P.S. § 17-1719-A (14) of the Charter School Law mandates that students be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities offered by their home school district, provided that they are not offered by Pa Virtual. Students must comply with the policies and meet the specific eligibility criteria set forth by the home school district. Student athletes must also satisfy eligibility requirements established by the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association. Students who are members of a sports team with their home school district must continue to satisfy grade requirements to be part of the team. Coaches seeking academic information from PA Virtual must make a request in writing to the Director of

Student Services and provide their email address. PA Virtual will only notify the home district when grades fall below a “C.”

## **Section VI: PSSA and Keystone Exam Overview**

As a public cyber charter school, PA Virtual is mandated to comply with administration of assessments and the reporting associated with the results of those assessments. Pennsylvania assessments include the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA), and the Keystone Exams.

To comply with the mandates for the PSSA, PA Virtual contracts with a variety of sites around the state to accommodate the statewide, geographic dispersion of our students and families. As such, efforts are made to locate testing sites within an hours’ drive from our students’ residences. In certain cases, it may be necessary to travel longer than an hour. Such tests are administered over a one- to four-day period, depending on the student’s grade level and state testing requirements. Testing dates and locations are published prior to any particular testing time-window.

### **PSSA Testing**

The PSSA is a state-mandated assessment aligned to the Pennsylvania Core Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics and to the Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Science, Technology, Environment, and Ecology. PSSA tests reveal cumulative and individual scores that attempt to quantify student performance. In Pennsylvania, all public schools are required to administer the English Language Arts and Mathematics PSSA assessments to students enrolled in grades 3 through 8 and the Science PSSA assessment to students enrolled in grades 4 and 8.

### **Keystone Exams**

Keystone Exams are end-of-course assessments in designated content areas. The Keystone Exams serve two purposes: (1) high-school accountability assessments for federal and state purposes, and (2) high-school graduation requirements for students as defined by state law. The Algebra I and Literature Keystone Exams are aligned to the Pennsylvania Core Standards in Mathematics and English Language Arts. The Biology Keystone Exam is aligned to the enhanced Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Science. In order to satisfy federal accountability requirements, all public schools in Pennsylvania are required to administer the Keystone Exams in Algebra I, Biology, and Literature, at least once, by spring of a student’s 11<sup>th</sup> grade year.

A student is permitted to retake any Keystone Exam in which the student did not score proficient or above at the next available testing date, as long as the student has participated, in a satisfactory manner, in supplemental instruction and is not in 12th grade. A student who has achieved a score of proficient or advanced on a Keystone Exam is not permitted to retake the exam.

### **Attendance Policy at PSSA and Keystone Exam Testing**

PA Virtual, a Pennsylvania public school, must abide by the procedures established by the Pennsylvania Department of Education regarding PSSA and Keystone exams. The state assessments require travel to and from the selected testing site. Travel to PSSA and Keystone testing locations is the responsibility of the guardian. Parents who wish to opt their student out of state testing can submit a request to their student’s Principal to review the assessments to determine if the assessment conflicts with the parents’/guardians’ religious beliefs. Parent/Guardian requests must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the administration

of the state assessment. During the on-site review, PA Virtual will protect the validity and integrity of the state assessments. If, after review, the parent/guardian finds the assessment to be in conflict with their religious beliefs, they have the right to submit a written request to the CEO for exemption, stating their objection.

#### **Absence from Testing:**

- Parents/guardians must contact their site coordinator to inform the school of the absence and provide the valid excuse. Site coordinators work with families to accommodate the situation.
- If a student is absent from their testing site and the parent has not provided a legal excuse for the absence from the testing site, the student is expected to follow their schedule and be in attendance according to the daily and class attendance policies listed in the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct.
- For High School students who do not partake in Keystone testing, an [alternative pathway to graduation](#) must be submitted to the High School administration for approval. .

#### **Medical Exemptions from Testing:**

- According to PDE, a medical emergency “applies to rare circumstances in which a student cannot take or finish taking the assessment during the entire testing window, including make-up dates, due to a recent significant medical emergency.”
- A medical emergency can only be approved by the academic program Principal. If the medical emergency is not approved by the academic program Principal, it must be logged as an unexcused absence.

## **Section VII: School Operation Overview**

### **Technology**

One of Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School’s core values is that “technology can be leveraged to be a powerful tool to support an effective 21st century education.” Pennsylvania Virtual provides each student a laptop and printer to support the learning process as well as internet reimbursement to offset the cost of internet services in the home.

REMINDER: The school-issued laptop is school property and must be returned when the student graduates or is expelled from or in any other way is no longer enrolled in Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School.

### **Digital/Electronic Usage (Acceptable Use & Internet Safety Policy)**

Students are expected to respect the technology resource privileges given to them. The computers and computer accounts, components of the technology resources provided to Users (parents, learning coaches, students, employees, etc.) are to assist them in the performance of PA Virtual related functions. Users shall not have an expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send, or access on the computer system. The Computer Resources belong to Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School and must be used primarily for Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School’s business. All students must keep their passwords confidential. Using another person’s passwords or accounts is a violation of this rule. It is also a violation of this rule to break into (hack) other files or systems, to download copyrighted material, or to conduct a personal business enterprise using the school computer network. Students are prohibited from entering any sites on the Internet which contain sexually explicit material. Entering progress hours on the OnLine School for work that has not been completed is considered a form of Academic Dishonesty. Additional rules on computer use are listed in the School’s Acceptable Use Policy. Parents, guardians, and Learning Coaches interested in reviewing the Acceptable Use Policy should contact the CEO’s office.

## Software

Each school-issued laptop comes pre-installed with the programs necessary to complete school assignments. PA Virtual recognizes the need to install additional software based on a student's grade level, course load, and special education requirements. This software, although not preinstalled, can be installed by the families with a call to the Technology Helpline (1-877-8833653). Information technology technicians will be able to help you install any approved software based on the child's needs. NOTE: All ISP software and/or drivers are considered "approved". If you need to install software to connect to the Internet, you should call the Technology Helpline (1877-883-3653).

## Computer Security

Users shall not attempt to circumvent Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School technology protection measures or uncover security loopholes or bugs. Users shall not gain or attempt to gain unauthorized access to restricted areas or files on the computer system. Users shall not tamper with any software protections or restrictions placed on computer applications, files, or directories. Users who engage in this type of activity shall be subject to loss of computer privileges, disciplinary action up to and including expulsion, in accordance with the School's Student Code of Conduct, as well as civil and criminal liability.

### Passwords

Users shall be responsible for safeguarding their passwords for access to the Computer Resources. Individual passwords shall not be printed, stored online, or given to others without express consent of the Chief Executive Officer. Users are responsible for all transactions made using their passwords. No User shall access or attempt to access the Computer Resources with another User's password or account. Users shall be required to log off the Computer Resources when usage time is completed. The Use of passwords to gain access to the Computer Resources or to encode particular files or messages does not imply that Users have an expectation of privacy in the material they create or receive on the Computer Resources. Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School retains access to all material stored on its Computer Resources, regardless of whether that material has been encoded with a particular User's password.

## Internet, Email and Chat Room Etiquette

- Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School students shall ensure that all communication through Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School's technology is conducted in a courteous manner. The use of suggestive, vulgar, or obscene language is prohibited pursuant to the School's Student Code of Conduct.
- Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School students shall not reveal private or personal information of their own, other Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School students, or their families through school email or technology without clear and specific approval from their school.
- Students should share messages and documents only with those students with a specific need to know. The transmission of email to large groups, through the use of e-mail distribution lists, or sending of messages with large file attachments (attachments larger than 5.0 Mb) should be avoided.
- E-mail and document privacy cannot be guaranteed. For security reasons, messages and documents transmitted through the Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School system or network infrastructure are the property of Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School and are subject to inspection. Students should also be aware that deleted messages and documents can and will be inspected, if deemed appropriate.

## Computer, Device, and Internet Use

- Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School students who identify or perceive an actual or suspected security problem shall immediately alert the school, by contacting the Helpline (877-883-3653), Family Support Coordinator (FSC), Assistant Principal, or Principal.
- Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School students shall change their account passwords upon receipt of equipment. Students shall not reveal their account passwords to others or allow any other person to use their accounts. Similarly, students shall not use other students' accounts.
- Any and all use of technology assets is subject to monitoring by Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School, and access to the Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School network shall be revoked for any student with a history of security problems.
- All terms and conditions as stated in this document are applicable to all students of Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School. Any student violating these policies or applicable local, state, or federal laws while using the Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School network shall be subject to loss of network privileges and other disciplinary actions deemed appropriate pursuant to the School's Student Code of Conduct.

## School Email System

To create a solid avenue for communication, each student and Parent/Learning Coach is provided with a secure school email account that functions as the communication highway with the School. All Blackboard accounts will be associated with the Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School – issued email address, so any email message sent through Blackboard will go to the School-provided email address. We utilize this means of communication for a number of reasons:

- *Consistency in Communication:* Learning Coaches will not have to notify Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School of changes to e-mail addresses or worry that an old email account address exists in a profile somewhere and messages are not being received.
- *Spam Filters:* Since Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School controls the e-mail account, you will not have to worry that your ISP has blocked Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School e-mail as spam.
- *Separate School Activity from Personal Activity:* With a separate Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School-issued email account, there are no worries of deleting or missing an important School email. The Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School-issued email account should be used for school-related correspondence only.

All Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School policies related to the Student Code of Conduct also apply to usage of the Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School issued email account.

## Technical Support

In the event that the computer equipment or printer supplied by Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School is in need of support or repairs the end user should either contact their Family Support Coordinator or contact the Technology Helpline directly at 1-877-883-3653. Such contact serves as the initial support mechanism for Pennsylvania Virtual computer and printer equipment.

## Defective Equipment

A defective laptop must be returned to PA Virtual in 3 days to avoid unexcused absence accrual and so a replacement can be quickly shipped back to the student. A replacement laptop will not be shipped until the defective laptop has been received. Please contact your Family Support Coordinator (FSC) if your student is without a laptop. If you no longer need to send the laptop back for repair, please contact our Technology

Support Team at (484) 243-0000 or Returns@pavcs.us to cancel the trouble ticket and avoid future contact or correspondence. A defective laptop that is not returned in a timely manner could result in a hold on your Internet Rebate check or deactivation of your Blackboard account. The laptop should be returned in the original packaging along with the provided power cord. You do not have to return the supplied printer, headset, or school laptop bag, as these items are considered “consumables” and are yours to keep. An unused printer may be returned and any used printer that you do not wish to keep may be dropped off to any retailer that recycles electronic equipment.

## **Damaged, Lost or Stolen Equipment**

Users shall be responsible for damage to Technology Resources, equipment, systems, and/or software pursuant to the School’s Student Code of Conduct

. Any and all damage incurred due to a User's intentional or negligent misuse of PA Virtual’s technology resources, including loss of property and staff time, may be charged to the User. PA Virtual administrators have the authority to sign any criminal complaint regarding damage to PA Virtual technology. Refer to PA Virtual’s Improper, Negligent, or Willful Damage to Computer, Printer, Monitor, and/or Other School Property Policy.

### **Reporting Damage to Technology Resources**

1. Contact your Family Support Coordinator (FSC), or
2. Contact the Technology Helpline directly at 1-877-883-3653

### **Reporting a Missing or Stolen Technology Resource**

When a parent or student believes that a school-issued Technology Resource is missing (missing equipment is considered stolen for purposes of recovery and insurance claims) or stolen, they ~~should~~:

1. Immediately file a true and accurate report with the local police department and/or law enforcement agency;
2. Notify the student’s Family Support Coordinator (FSC) immediately;
3. Submit a copy of the police/law enforcement report via email, fax, or US Mail to the Director of Technology of the Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School; and
4. Cooperate with PA Virtual and/or authorities in any and all legal efforts/actions taken to retrieve the stolen property.

## **Social Media**

While safe and appropriate use of social media are useful in education programming, unsafe and inappropriate use of social media both inside and outside of PA Virtual is prohibited and subject to School discipline, as well as reporting to local, state and/or federal law enforcement, local and state child welfare agencies and to other governmental agencies in accordance with applicable law.

Communications which may not be posted through social media include but are not limited to:

- Profane, vulgar language, obscene or sexually explicit comments;
- Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- Content that is threatening, intimidating, hostile, offensive, or that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination based on race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, gender identity, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
- Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;



- Comments not topically related to PA Virtual social media post being commented upon;
- Spam or links to other sites;
- Promotion of particular services, products, or political organizations without prior written approval from PA Virtual;
- Infringement on copyrights or trademarks;
- Confidential, personally identifiable or otherwise sensitive information pertaining to PA Virtual, its students, employees or guests;

All students are required to acknowledge and consent to the Social Media and Networking Guidelines Procedures & Consent Form.

### **Internet Reimbursement/Travel Reimbursement**

Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School reimburses families \$35 per each month the school is in session (ten months total) regarding the use of the Internet. Parents do not have to provide a receipt to receive the reimbursement. Internet reimbursement checks are sent out twice a year on December 15th and July 15th. The reimbursement is meant to help subsidize monthly fees for internet service paid for by Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School families. Please note that Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School will not reimburse Internet Service Provider (ISP) charges until receipt of the following outstanding items: Change of Address Notification Form, Health Forms, signatures on Special Education documents, etc.

### **Travel Reimbursement-PA Virtual Health Screening Site**

Upon completion of the required health screening at the PA Virtual health screening location, attendance information will be securely sent to our main office. Subsequently, a reimbursement of \$20 for travel expenses will be issued to you in the same manner as you receive your Internet Service Provider (ISP) reimbursement. There is no further action required on your part.

### **Travel Reimbursement-PA Virtual State Testing Site**

For each attended day of assigned state testing, we will securely send the attendance details to our main office. Following this, a reimbursement of \$20 to cover travel expenses will be processed in the same manner as your ISP reimbursement. You do not need to take any additional steps.

### **Instructional Property**

The books, curriculum, supplies, and equipment provided by PA Virtual cannot be sold or transferred and are to be used solely by the student in their studies. When a student is no longer attending PA Virtual, such items are to be returned within 5 days of the student's last educational day. Instructions for return of books, curriculum, supplies, and equipment will be provided after the student withdrawal is processed. Questions regarding equipment returns should be directed to the Technology Support Team at [\(484\) 243-0000](tel:484-243-0000) or [Returns@pavcs.us](mailto>Returns@pavcs.us). Questions regarding curriculum returns should be directed to your Family Support Coordinator (FSC) or your program Project Manager.



## Section VIII: Student Services Overview

PA Virtual believes the responsibility of educating your student is based on a team approach (Diamond Model of Education). From rigorous academics, health services, and student engagement in the online classroom to parent involvement through workshops and face-to-face meetings, PA Virtual provides the tools and services students need to succeed – inside the classroom and outside in the greater community.

### Family Support Department

Family Support Coordinators (FSCs) are assigned to each family to provide consistent one-on-one support throughout the school year. The role of the Family Support Coordinator (FSC) is to be a primary contact for students and families and to provide regular support by removing barriers that may prevent learning. The Family Support Coordinator (FSC) does this through the following actions:

- Serving as a family's first point of contact;
- Responding to family concerns and providing continuous support;
- Conducting home visits as needed and/or required;
- Assisting student and parents with school systems and programs;
- Monitoring student attendance and developing School Attendance Improvement Plans (SAIPs);
- Motivating students to achieve and engage in class; and,
- Ensuring compliance with all school policies including testing requirements and health services.

### Parent Education and Engagement

Parental involvement is at the core of PA Virtual. Our school is designed to support parents as Learning Coaches for their students. We help parents achieve their academic and social goals for their students by offering opportunities for parent education and engagement. We enhance our parents' knowledge and education by providing resources, weekly online sessions for parents, parent certificate programs, and an optional parent mentor program.

Live Parent Learning Sessions are presented weekly via Blackboard Collaborate Ultra. They contain valuable information for Learning Coaches and include communication tips, how to develop an effective learning environment, and ideas for organization and time management. These sessions are also recorded and can be viewed at parents' convenience. The recorded sessions are located in the Parent Organization.

The Parent Ambassador Mentor Program offers a unique one-on-one mentoring relationship between Learning Coaches. Families in this program are matched with a current PA Virtual family to provide yearlong guidance and support through email and phone contact.

### Title I: Parental Involvement Requirements

PA Virtual Charter School parent and family engagement activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Involvement of parents in the development of the Title I, II, and IV plans, the Parent Involvement policy and the process of school review and improvement.
2. Provision of technical assistance, coordination, and support to the school community in their efforts to enable effective parent involvement for the purpose of improving student academic achievement and performance.
3. Development of school and parent capacity for strong and meaningful parent involvement with the goal of improving the academic quality of the school.

4. Coordination and integration of parental involvement under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) with parental involvement programs through our Pupil Service Department and teachers.
5. Support of parents in conducting an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of parental and family involvement in order to improve the academic quality of the school.
6. Involvement of parents in the activities of the school in order to adequately represent the needs of the school community.

## **Pupil Health**

School health services are available to all enrolled students to support their health, wellness, academic growth, and achievement. The PA Virtual Pupil Health team includes certified school nurses, support nurses, and the administrative team, in partnership with healthcare providers, families and school faculty across the Commonwealth. The PA Virtual Health Services and Policies have been developed and maintained in accordance with the School Health Laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and with the goal to support all children physically, mentally, and emotionally throughout their education.

### **The School Nurse**

The school nurse maintains health records on every student. This includes physicals, health screenings, dental exams, and immunizations. The school nurse advocates for students by:

- ✓ Reducing the occurrence and spread of preventable disease by tracking and enforcing immunization requirements.
- ✓ Serving students with disabilities or complex medical needs who require feeding tubes, breathing treatments, blood glucose monitoring, insulin injections, seizure management.
- ✓ Serving as health advocates and care coordinators to connect students and their families with school and community-based resources to get the services they need.
- ✓ Identifying medical issues in students who require further evaluation.
- ✓ Sometimes serving as the only health care professional to which students have access.
- ✓ Often being the first professionals to identify and refer students the psychosomatic symptoms of a child struggling with mental health issues.
- ✓ Developing and implementing Section 504 plans, the health portion of Special Education Individual Education Programs (IEP's) and Individualized Health Care plans

### **School Administration of Medication**

It is the general policy of Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School (PA Virtual) that whenever possible all medications should be administered outside the hours of school gatherings. Parents and guardians assume full responsibility for this part of their child's health care. When attending a school-sponsored event, such as but not limited to state testing, it is recommended that a parent or guardian be present to administer any needed medication. While the School may ask a parent/guardian to be present to administer medication to a student, the School still has the legal duty to ensure that a Student receives medical care, including administration of medication, by a licensed nurse, under the supervision of a certified School Nurse, in accordance with a Student's documented health needs in school and at school-sponsored events or on school transportation.

PA Virtual understands that for students with some diagnoses, it may be necessary for the student to carry and self-administer emergency medications. Self-administration of medication refers to situations in which students carry their own medication on their person and administer that medication to themselves during the school day as ordered by their physician and authorized by their parent/guardian and school.

Students who may need emergency medications due to serious medical conditions (i.e. life threatening allergies, asthma, diabetes, etc.) must supply the School Nurse with an appropriate Action Plan form (various forms based on student's medical conditions) and Authorization to Carry and Self Administer Emergency Medication form signed by the physician and/or written parental/guardian consent. Under the guidance of our school physician, standing orders are available for emergency medications in situations where private physician paperwork is not available. The pupil health department will alert the appropriate PA Virtual personnel of the Action Plan and authorization form and forward a copy to the appropriate personnel.

The following requirements must be met for the self-administration of emergency medication:

1. The school requires a written statement or order by a doctor or other prescribing medical professional indicating the drug, the dose, the timing of the dose, and the diagnosis/reason the medication is required.
2. A written or verbal request from the student's parent/guardian that the school comply with the orders of the doctor and the ability of the school to reserve the right to require the doctor to provide a statement justifying the continued use of the medication beyond a certain time period.
3. The physician and parent will ensure that the student is competent in self-care through demonstration of administration skills and responsible behavior. The student is restricted from making the medication available to other students.

In addition to self-administration, PA Virtual staff that have completed the necessary training programs as approved by the PA Department of Health will be able to assist or administer emergency medications.

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to medications to the School Nurse and note the expiration date of the medication on the original containers in which the medication was issued.

## Student Health Mandates

Student Health Mandate Summary														
Mandate	K*	1*	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Enrolling
Immunization Compliance	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Physician Physical Examination**	x						x						x	x
Dental Examination**	x			x				x						x
Growth Screening (Height, Weight & Body Mass Index)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Vision Screening (Near and Far)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	

Other Vision Screening: Color, Stereo/Depth Perception (3-D), Convex)		x												
Hearing Screening	x	x	x	x				x				x		
Scoliosis Screening							x	x						
<b>*If a student does not attend Kindergarten, Physical &amp; Dental Examinations are mandated for First Grade (1).</b>														

### Physical Examinations

Physical Examinations are mandated for students entering kindergarten (or first grade if skipped in kindergarten), sixth grade, eleventh grade, and students of any grade who are newly enrolled to the school.

### Dental Examinations

Dental Examinations are mandated for students entering kindergarten (or first grade if skipped kindergarten), third grade, seventh grade, and students of any grade who are newly enrolled to the school.

**Please note:** Dental examinations and Physical examinations performed during the school year prior to the mandated grade are acceptable. For example, you may turn in a physical completed after July 1st of the student's fifth grade year to satisfy the student's sixth grade physical.

### Health Screening Examinations

Health Screenings are mandated for every student, of every grade, every year. The breakdown of which particular screenings are due for which grades is as follows:

Health Screenings are due each school year by June 14th, as follows:	
Screenings	Grade Mandated
Height & Weight	Kindergarten through Twelfth grade
Body Mass Index	Kindergarten through Twelfth grade
Vision (Far & Near)	Kindergarten through Twelfth grade
Color vision, stereo/depth perception, convex lens tests	First (or any grade if never performed)
Hearing	Kindergarten through Third, Seventh & Eleventh
Scoliosis	Sixth and Seventh grade

Student Health Screenings may be performed in any of the following ways:

- A private physician may record results of any screening performed as part of a physical or health screening on the school form or provide a print out from the office; or,
- Attend a free **PA Virtual Health Screen** site during the school year.

## Immunization Records & Requirements

Immunizations are mandated for enrollment and entry into new grade levels. All Pennsylvania school students must be fully compliant with immunizations or risk exclusion. Your child may be required to receive further immunizations. An ongoing audit will alert you to noncompliant immunizations. It is possible that the immunization record PA virtual possesses on file is incomplete or inaccurate. Please share the updated chart below with your physician to be sure student immunizations are current and remember to forward an updated immunization record to Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School's Pupil Health Department anytime your student receives additional immunizations.

Pennsylvania School Immunization Requirements	
<b>Diphtheria Tetanus, and Pertussis</b> (DTaP and DTP)	<b>Grades K-12: Four (4)</b> properly spaced doses with one dose on or after the 4th birthday.
<b>Tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis</b> (Tdap)	<b>Grade 7: One (1)</b> dose before the first day of school and after the age of 10
<b>Polio</b>	<b>Grades K-12: Four (4)</b> properly spaced doses with one dose on or after the 4th birthday.
<b>Measles, Mumps, Rubella*</b> (given as MMR)	<b>Grades K-12: Two (2)</b> doses after 1st Birthday
<b>Hepatitis B</b>	<b>Grades K-12: Three (3)</b> properly spaced doses
<b>Varicella*</b>	<b>Grades K-12: Two (2)</b> doses after 1st birthday.  <b>Parent statement of chickenpox disease (month/year) is also accepted.</b>
<b>Meningococcal conjugate (MCV4)</b>	<b>Grade 7: One (1)</b> dose before the first day of school.  <b>Grade 12: Two (2)</b> doses, with the second dose given on or after the 16th birthday.
*Please note: The MMR and Varicella vaccines are live virus vaccines. This means the vaccines must be given on the same day or at least 28 days apart.	

If your student does not receive the required vaccinations due to a medical or religious/ethical/moral exemption, please contact a PA Virtual School Nurse to complete an Immunization Exemption Certificate. Pennsylvania's school immunization requirements can be found at: 28 PA Code CH.23 (School Immunization). Contact your healthcare provider or call 1-877-PA-HEALTH for more information.

**All medical forms can be sent to:**

- **Online form upload:**

<https://sites.google.com/pavcs.us/pupilhealth/forms/upload-forms?authuser=0>

OR

- **Fax line:** 1-866-871-9956 (secure nurse fax line)

## **Reportable Diseases**

Local, state, and national agencies (i.e., the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) require certain diseases be reported because they are considered to be of great public health importance. The latest addition to this list was varicella, or the chicken pox disease. Health-care providers, including School Nurses, are mandated by Chapter 27 of the Pennsylvania Administrative Code to report cases of “reportable diseases” to the PA Department of Health. Please notify a Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School Nurse if your child/children are diagnosed this school year with any of the diseases referenced in the below Department of Health Website List. This data is important because it allows agencies to identify trends in disease occurrence.

**Pennsylvania Department of Health List of Reportable Diseases** (PA Code, Title 28, Chapter 27)

**Link to Department of Health Website List of Reportable Diseases:**

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/Reporting-Registries/Pages/Reportable-Diseases.aspx>

## **McKinney Vento Act, Education for Homeless Youth**

**PA Virtual Homeless Liaison, Ms. Widmann at (484) 685-4625 or [cwidmann@pavcs.us](mailto:cwidmann@pavcs.us)**

The McKinney Vento Act is designed to ensure homeless children and youth are provided with a Free and Appropriate Public Education on an equal basis with all other children in the state. Program objectives and activities are intended to remove and/or ease the barriers to enrollment and educational success for homeless children.

Section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Act, as amended by the ESSA, defines the following terms:

- (a) “Homeless children and youths” means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The term includes—
- (1) Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals.
  - (2) Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
  - (3) Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
  - (4) Migratory children (as defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended), who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described in this definition.

PA Virtual Charter School believes that homeless youth should have access to free and appropriate public education and wishes to limit the barriers that homeless children may face. Our goal is to have the educational process continue as uninterrupted as possible while children are in homeless situations under the [McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act](#).

Homeless youth are entitled to immediate enrollments and their families are not required to prove residency regarding school district enrollment. These students will be enrolled at PA Virtual without delay.

For more detailed information and resources, please access the [PA Virtual-McKinney Vento Act, Education for Homeless Youth Resource Document](#).

## Section IX: Student and Parent Code of Conduct

### Student Conduct Philosophy

The school experience should be both exciting and satisfying to students and staff. The discipline guidelines of PA Virtual emphasize the importance of a culture where diversity and individualism are celebrated in an atmosphere of mutual respect. All parents, guardians, learning coaches, staff members, and the larger PA Virtual community share the responsibility for teaching our students the art of making good choices. In order for a student to reach their potential, the school environment should be safe, orderly, and encourage the fullest possible educational development of each student. PA Virtual will not tolerate any actions from students that in any way interferes with the delivery of educational services, jeopardizes the health, safety, and well-being of any member of the school community, or threatens the integrity and stability of the school itself. These rules shall apply to any conduct:

1. On School Property or in a School Setting (including but not limited to the on-line school and at any testing sites, alternative schools or programs, school-sponsored discussion groups or other school-sponsored activities or programs) at any time.
2. Off School Property at any school activity, function or event (including but not limited to educational outings and extracurricular activities);
3. Off School Property when the conduct may reasonably be expected to:
  - a. Undermine the proper disciplinary authority of the school;
  - b. Endanger the safety of members of the School Community;
  - c. Disrupt the school; or,
  - d. Interfere with the educational process or program in the school, as allowed by law or to undermine the disciplinary authority of the school the safety of students or staff, or to cause disruption within the School or School Setting.
4. While traveling to and from School or School events, functions, or activities, including but not limited to actions on any school bus, van, or public transportation.

### Parent/Learning Coach Conduct Philosophy

At PA Virtual, we believe in fostering a supportive and respectful online learning community. Parents/learning coaches play a vital role in the success of our students. To ensure a positive and enriching virtual learning experience, we ask all parents and learning coaches to adhere to the following code of conduct:

1. 1. Online Etiquette:

- a. **Respectful Communication:** Communicate with teachers, staff, and other parents with courtesy and respect. Use positive and constructive language in all interactions.
  - b. **Privacy:** Respect the privacy of other families and students. Do not share personal information about others without their explicit consent.
  - c. **Timeliness:** Ensure that your student is ready and logged in on time for virtual classes and meetings. Punctuality contributes to a smooth learning experience for everyone.
2. **Virtual Classes/Meetings:**
  - a. **Professionalism:** Treat virtual meetings with the same level of professionalism as you would in-person meetings. Dress appropriately and create a distraction-free environment.
  - b. **Active Participation:** Encourage your student to actively participate in virtual classes. Minimize background noise and disruptions during online sessions.
  - c. **Technical Readiness:** Ensure that your technology, including internet connectivity and audio/video equipment, is in good working order before virtual meetings.
  - d. **Dress Code for On-Camera Sessions:** When appearing on camera during virtual meetings, please adhere to a dress code that reflects a professional and respectful environment. Avoid clothing that may be distracting or inappropriate for an educational setting.
3. **Communication with Staff:**
  - a. **Appropriate Language in Class Settings:** During virtual classes or any class-related communication, use language that is respectful, supportive, and conducive to a positive learning environment. Avoid the use of offensive or inappropriate language, both in spoken and written communication at all times.
  - b. **Appropriate Channels:** Use designated communication channels (email, virtual platforms) to communicate with teachers and staff. Allow a reasonable time for a response before following up.
  - c. **Constructive Feedback:** Provide feedback in a constructive manner. If you have concerns, address them respectfully and work collaboratively with staff to find solutions.
4. **Close Proximity During Virtual Classes:**
  - a. **Quiet Environment:** Create a quiet and supportive environment for your student during virtual classes. Minimize distractions and encourage focus.
  - b. **Respect Boundaries:** While in close proximity to your student during virtual classes, respect their independence. Allow them to actively engage with the class without unnecessary interference.
  - c. **Attendance and Assignment Completion:** Take responsibility for ensuring your student attends school regularly, participates in classes, and completes assignments on time. Encourage a strong work ethic and a commitment to academic success.
  - d. **Parental Involvement:** Stay informed about your student's academic progress. Attend parent-teacher conferences and proactively address any challenges your student may be facing.

## Disciplinary Action Schedule

Discipline at PA Virtual follows a Disciplinary Action Schedule. The schedule below describes two levels of discipline; Level I and Level II. The schedule provides examples, but is not a comprehensive list, of student behavior subject to sanctions.

### Level I Offenses

- Disruption
- Failure to follow school rules and policies
- Logging attendance hours when student has not completed lessons
- Skipping required coursework or class
- Disruptive and/or Offensive Use of Language



- Damage, Destruction, or Theft of School or Private Property
- Fighting
- Reckless Conduct
- Possessing, distributing, and/or Tobacco Products and Paraphernalia
- Possessing, distributing, and/or drugs or alcohol
- Academic Dishonesty/Abuse of Computer or Internet

## **Level II Offenses**

- Harassment including Sexual Harassment and/or Bullying
- Indecent Assault or Indecent Exposure
- Assault on school personnel, students or other persons lawfully on school premises or at school-sponsored events or required state testing sites, outings or health screening sites.
- Possession of a Weapon
- Aggravated Offenses
- Arson
- Possession/sale of pornography
- Hazing
- Robbery
- Terroristic threats, whether written, verbal, or cyber in nature

### ***Approved Interventions/Sanctions for Level I Violations***

For any violation of a Level I offense, a student may face one or more the following corrective actions:

- Written notice to parents informing them of the student's behavior;
- Meeting between the teacher, the parent, and student to discuss the student's behavior and expectations for improving their behavior;
- Meeting between the parent, student, and Assistant Principal or Principal;
- Notice to parents informing them of the student's behavior;
- Supervised mediation between the students involved;
- Meeting with a case worker or a probation officer, where applicable and appropriate;
- Suspension;
- Late penalties for assignments due on the day of an unexcused class absence;
- Detention; and/or
- Friday In-School Suspension
- Childline Referral (if applicable to the specific situation)

### ***Approved Interventions/Sanctions for Level II Violations***

For any violation of a Level II offense, a student may face one or more the following corrective actions:

- Placement of the student in an alternative education program;
- Placement in an alternative education program, including a remedial disciplinary program;
- Meeting with case worker or probation officer, where applicable and appropriate;
- Friday detention(s);
- Friday in-school suspension (FISS);
- Out of school suspension;
- Expulsion from the School; and/or
- County Children and Youth Referral

## Due Process: Discipline

The Board of Trustees has the authority to make reasonable and necessary rules regarding the conduct of students. Such rules must be fair and reasonable, which is defined as using a rational means to accomplish a legitimate school purpose. PA Virtual must publish and distribute the Code of Conduct to students and parents and make copies of the Code of Conduct available on the School's website. Student discipline must be based on applicable provisions within the Student Code of Conduct.

## Complaint Procedure

### Step 1—Reporting

Students who believe they have been subject to conduct that constitutes a violation of this policy are encouraged to immediately report the incident to the Principal or if the complaint involves conduct based on sex, it may be reported to the School's Title IX Officer. For all further Steps in a complaint involving potential Title IX issues, please see a copy of the Title IX Board Policy on School's website at (CITE) or a copy of the same is available at the Main Office at the Charter School building.

If the Principal or the Title IX Officer is the subject of a complaint, the student shall report the incident directly to the CEO. If the CEO is the subject of a complaint, the student shall report the incident directly to the Board of Directors.

### Step 2 —Investigation

Upon receiving a complaint of unlawful harassment, the Principal or designee shall immediately investigate the complaint, unless the Principal is the subject of the complaint or is unable to conduct the investigation.

The investigation may consist of individual interviews with the complainant, the accused, and others with knowledge relative to the incident. The investigator may also evaluate any other information and materials relevant to the investigation.

The obligation to conduct this investigation shall not be negated by the fact that a criminal investigation of the incident is pending or has been concluded.

### Step 3—Investigative Report

The Principal or designee shall prepare a written report within fifteen (15) days, unless additional time to complete the investigation is required. The report shall include a summary of the investigation, a determination of whether the complaint has been substantiated as factual and whether it is a violation of this policy, and a recommended disposition of the complaint.

The findings of the investigation shall be provided to the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of the complainant, the accused, and also to the CEO.

### Step 4 —School Action

If the investigation results in a finding that the complaint is founded and constitutes a violation of this policy, PA Virtual shall take prompt, corrective action to ensure that such conduct ceases and will not recur.

Disciplinary actions shall be consistent with the Student-Parent Handbook, Board policies and school procedures, and local, state and federal laws.

If it is determined during or after the investigation by the persons conducting the investigation that a student has knowingly made a false complaint under this policy, such student shall be subject to disciplinary action as stated above in Leveled Offenses.

### **Cooperation with Legal Authorities**

Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School will cooperate as required with any local, state, or federal investigators or law enforcement officers who may contact the School in the course of any criminal investigation in accordance with the School's Memorandum of Understanding. All investigators and law enforcement officers must present proper identification prior to obtaining any information from the School. All investigators or law enforcement officials must identify themselves to the CEO/principal or CEO/ principal's designee upon contact with the School.

Whenever an investigator or law enforcement officer comes on school property or testing site or outing location with the appropriate legal authority to request records and information, that person will be provided with access to these records. Appropriate legal authority typically involves a court subpoena specifying the documents and information to be reviewed under Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or if it is determined by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) that a health and safety emergency exists which is an exception to FERPA's requirement of obtaining consent from a student's parent/guardian before disclosing requested information to law enforcement. Except in cases involving abuse at home, the CEO/principal will contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student with whom the law enforcement person wishes to speak. In the former case, the CEO/principal will request permission to call the parent(s)/guardian(s), but will follow the decision of the investigative officer. The CEO/principal or designee shall select a Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School administrator or appropriate staff person to be present at any meeting between a student and an investigator or law enforcement officer that occurs on School grounds. In cases involving abuse at home, the CEO/principal will request permission for a School representative to be present at the meeting or within the line of sight of such a meeting, but will follow the decision of the investigative officer.

### **Search and Seizure**

Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School acknowledges the need for safe storage of books, clothing, school materials, and other personal property when at a test site or school sponsored activity. Lockers, shelves, or cabinets provided for student use remain the property of Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School. Pennsylvania Virtual Charter School reserves the right to inspect a student's storage space when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the storage space is improperly used for the storage of contraband, a substance or object the possession of which is illegal, or any material which poses a hazard to the health, safety, or welfare of any member of the school community.

### **Procedures of Disciplinary Expulsion of Children with Disabilities**

There are special rules in Pennsylvania for excluding students with disabilities for disciplinary reasons:

#### **Authority of School Personnel (34 CFR §300.530)**

1. **Case-by-case determination** School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis, when determining whether a change of placement, made in accordance with the following requirements related to discipline, is appropriate for a student with a disability who violates a school code of student conduct.

2. **General** To the extent that they also take such action for students without disabilities, school personnel may, for not more than **ten (10) consecutive school days**, remove a student with a disability (other than a student with an intellectual disability who may not be suspended for even one day) who violates a code of student conduct from their current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting, another setting, or suspension. School personnel may also impose additional removals of the student in that same school year for separate incidents of misconduct, as long as those removals do not constitute a change of placement (see *Change of Placement Because of Disciplinary Removals* for the definition, below) or exceed fifteen (15) cumulative school days in a school year. Once a student with a disability has been removed from their current placement for a total of **ten (10) school days** in the same school year, the charter school must, during any subsequent days of removal in that school year, provide services to the extent required below under the subheading *Services*.
3. **Additional authority** If the behavior that violated the student code of conduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability (see *Manifestation determination*, below) and the disciplinary change of placement would exceed **ten (10) consecutive school days**, school personnel may apply the disciplinary procedures to that student with a disability in the same manner and for the same duration as it would to students without disabilities, except that the school must provide services to that student as described below under *Services*. The student's IEP Team determines the interim alternative educational setting for such services. Under PA special education regulations, a disciplinary exclusion of a student with a disability for more than fifteen (15) cumulative school days in a school year will be considered a pattern so as to be deemed a change in educational placement (explained under *Change of Placement Because of Disciplinary Removals*). The cyber charter school is required to issue a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP)/Prior Written Notice to parents prior to a removal that constitutes a change in placement (removal for more than ten (10) consecutive days or fifteen (15) cumulative days).
4. **Services** The services that must be provided to a student with a disability who has been removed from the student's current placement may be provided to an interim alternative educational setting. A cyber charter school is only required to provide services to a student with a disability who has been removed from their current placement for **ten (10) school days or less** in that school year, if it provides services to a child without disabilities who has been similarly removed. Students may have the responsibility to make up exams and work missed while being disciplined by suspension and may be permitted to complete these assignments within guidelines established by their cyber charter school. A child with a disability who is removed from the child's current placement for more than **10 consecutive school days must:**
  - a. Continue to receive educational services, so as to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP; **and**
  - b. Receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, and behavioral intervention services and modifications that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not happen again.

After a child with a disability has been removed from their current placement for **10 school days** during one school year, or if current removal is for **10 consecutive school days or less**, and if the removal is not a change of placement (see definition below), then school personnel, in consultation with at least one of the child's teachers, determine the extent to which services are needed to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP.

If the removal is a change of placement (see definition below), the child's IEP Team determines the appropriate services to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education

curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP.

5. **Manifestation determination** Within 10 school days of **any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct (except for a removal that does not constitute a change in educational placement i.e., is for 10 consecutive school days or less and not a change of placement)**, the cyber charter school, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team (as determined by the parent and the cyber charter school) must review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine:
  - a. If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; **or**
  - b. If the conduct in question was the direct result of the cyber charter school's failure to implement the child's IEP.

If the cyber charter school, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that either of those conditions was met, the conduct must be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability.

If the cyber charter school, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that the conduct in question was the direct result of the charter school's failure to implement the IEP, the charter school must take immediate action to remedy those deficiencies.

6. **Determination that behavior was a manifestation of the child's disability** If the cyber charter school, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team determine that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team must either:
  - a. Conduct a functional behavioral assessment, unless the cyber charter school had conducted a functional behavioral assessment before the behavior that resulted in the change of placement occurred, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for the child; **or**
  - b. If a behavioral intervention plan already has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior. Except as described below under the subheading **Special circumstances**, the cyber charter school must return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the school agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.
7. **Special circumstances** Whether or not the behavior was a manifestation of the child's disability, school personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting (determined by the child's IEP Team) for up to 45 school days, if the child:
  - a. Carries a weapon (see the **Definitions** below) to school or has a weapon at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the cyber charter school;
  - b. Knowingly has or uses illegal drugs (see the **Definitions** below), or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, (see the **Definitions** below), while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the cyber charter school; **or**
  - c. Has inflicted serious bodily injury (see the **Definitions** below) upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the State Educational Agency or a cyber charter school.
8. **Definitions**
  - a. *Controlled substance* means a drug or other substance identified under schedules I, II, III, IV, or V in section 202 (c) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812(c)).
  - b. *Illegal drug* means a controlled substance; but does not include a controlled substance that is legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed health-care professional or that is legally possessed or used under any other authority under that Act or under any other provision of Federal law.

- c. *Serious bodily injury* has the meaning given the term “serious bodily injury” under paragraph (3) of subsection (h) of section 1365 of title 18, United States Code.
  - d. *Weapon* has the meaning given the term “dangerous weapon” under paragraph (2) of the first subsection (g) of section 930 of title 18, United States Code.
9. **Notification** On the date it makes the decision to make a removal that is a change of placement of the child because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the cyber charter school must notify the parents of that decision via NOREP/PWN, and provide the parents with a procedural safeguards notice.

### **Change of Placement Because of Disciplinary Removals (34 CFR §300.536)**

A removal of a child with a disability from the child’s current educational placement is a **change of placement** requiring a NOREP/prior written notice if:

1. The removal is for more than 10 consecutive school days; **or**
2. The removal is for 15 cumulative school days total in any one school year;
3. The child has been subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern because:
  - a. The series of removals total more than 10 school days in a school year;
  - b. The child’s behavior is substantially similar to the child’s behavior in previous incidents that resulted in a series of removals;
  - c. Of such additional factors as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the child has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another; **and**

Whether a pattern of removals constitutes a change of placement is determined on a case-by- case basis by the cyber charter school and, if challenged, is subject to review through due process and judicial proceedings.

### **Determination of Setting (34 CFR §300.531) & Appeal (34 CFR §300.532)**

The IEP must determine the interim alternative educational setting for removals that are changes of placement, and removals under the headings *Additional authority and Special circumstances*, above.

1. **General** - The parent of a child with a disability may file a due process complaint (see above) to request a due process hearing if they disagree with:
  - a. Any decision regarding placement made under these discipline provisions; **or**
  - b. The manifestation determination described above.

The cyber charter school may file a due process complaint (see above) to request a due process hearing if it believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others.

2. **Authority of hearing officer** - A hearing officer that meets the requirements described under the subheading *Impartial Hearing Officer* must conduct the due process hearing and make a decision. The hearing officer may:
  - a. Return the child with a disability to the placement from which the child was removed if the hearing officer determines that the removal was a violation of the requirements described under the heading Authority of School Personnel, or that the child’s behavior was a manifestation of the child’s disability; or
  - b. Order a change of placement of the child with a disability to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days if the hearing officer determines that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others.

These hearing procedures may be repeated, if the cyber charter school believes that returning the child to the original placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others. Whenever a



parent or a cyber charter school files a due process complaint to request such a hearing, a hearing must be held that meets the requirements described under the headings *Due Process Complaint Procedures*, *Hearings on Due Process Complaints*, except as follows:

1. The SEA must arrange for an expedited due process hearing, which must occur within **20** school days of the date the hearing is filed and must result in a determination within **10** school days after the hearing.
2. Unless the parents and the cyber charter school agree in writing to waive the meeting, or agree to use mediation, a resolution meeting must occur within **7** calendar days of receiving notice of the due process complaint. The hearing may proceed unless the matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of both parties within **15** calendar days of receipt of the due process complaint.

A party may appeal the decision in an expedited due process hearing in the same way as they may for decisions in other due process hearings. When, as described above, the parent or cyber charter school has filed a due process complaint related to disciplinary matters, the child must (unless the parent and the State Educational Agency or cyber charter school agree otherwise) remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer, or until the expiration of the time period of removal as provided for and described under the heading *Authority of School Personnel*, whichever occurs first.

### **Special Rules for Students with an Intellectual Disability**

If a discipline problem involving a student eligible for special education with an intellectual disability is immediate or so severe as to warrant immediate action, the LEA must first contact the parents/guardians to see if they will agree to the change in educational placement. If the parents/guardians agree, the LEA issues notice to the parents/guardians. If there is no agreement, the LEA may contact the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) Bureau of Special Education at 717-783-6134 to request permission to impose a disciplinary exclusion which would be a change in educational placement. When PDE approves the change in educational placement, the LEA must issue notice to the parents/guardians. PDE cannot approve requests for a change in placement which would continue beyond 10 consecutive school days. When PDE does not approve the change in educational placement, the parents/guardians may request a due process hearing and then the pendency requirements under 34 C.F.R. § 300.518 apply.

### **Protections For Children Not Eligible For Special Education and Related Services (34 CFR §300.534)**

1. **General** If a child has not been determined eligible for special education and related services and violates a code of student conduct, but the cyber charter school had knowledge (as determined below) before the behavior that brought about the disciplinary action occurred, that the child was a child with a disability, then the child may assert any of the protections described in this notice.
2. **Basis of knowledge for disciplinary matters** A charter school must be deemed to have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability if, before the behavior that brought about the disciplinary action occurred:
  - a. The parent of the child expressed concern in writing that the child is in need of special education and related services to supervisory or administrative personnel of appropriate educational agency, or a teacher of the child;
  - b. The parent request an evaluation related to eligibility for special education and related services under Part B of the IDEA; **or**

- c. The child's teacher, or other cyber charter school personnel expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child directly to the cyber charter school's director of special education or to other supervisory personnel of the cyber charter school.
- 3. **Exception** A charter school would not be deemed to have such knowledge if:
  - a. The child's parent has not allowed an evaluation of the child or refused special education services; **or**
  - b. The child has been evaluated and determined to not be a child with a disability under Part B of the IDEA.
- 4. **Conditions that apply if there is no basis of knowledge** If prior to taking disciplinary measures against the child, a cyber charter school does not have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability, as described above under the sub-headings *Basis of knowledge for disciplinary matters and Exception*, the child may be subjected to the disciplinary measures that are applied to children without disabilities who engaged in comparable behaviors. However, if a request is made for an evaluation of a child during the time period in which the child is subjected to disciplinary measures, the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner. Until the evaluation is completed, the child remains in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which can include suspension or expulsion without educational services. If the child is determined to be a child with a disability, taking into consideration information from the evaluation conducted by the cyber charter school, and information provided by the parents, the charter school must provide special education and related services in accordance with Part B of the IDEA, including the disciplinary requirements described above.

## Referral to and Action By Law Enforcement and Judicial Authorities (34 CFR §300.535)

- 1. **The state and federal regulations do not:**
  - a. Prohibit an agency from reporting a crime committed by a child with a disability to appropriate authorities; or
  - b. Prevent State law enforcement and judicial authorities from exercising their responsibilities with regard to the application of Federal and State law to crimes committed by a child with a disability.
  - c. Subsequent to a referral to law enforcement, an updated functional behavior assessment and positive behavior support plan are required.
- 2. **Transmittal of records** If a cyber charter school reports a crime committed by a child with a disability, the cyber charter school: must ensure that copies of the child's special education and disciplinary records are transmitted for consideration by the authorities to whom the agency reports the crime; and may transmit copies of the child's special education and disciplinary records only to the extent permitted by FERPA.

## Section X: Annual Notice of Rights Regarding Student Records

### Consent for Disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information (34 CFR §300.622)

Unless the information is contained in education records, and the disclosure is authorized without parental consent under FERPA, your consent must be obtained before personally identifiable information is disclosed to parties other than officials of participating agencies. Except under the circumstances specified below, your



consent is not required before personally identifiable information is released to officials of participating agencies for purposes of meeting a requirement of Part B of the IDEA. Your consent, or consent of an eligible child who has reached the age of majority under State law, must be obtained before personally identifiable information is released to officials of participating agencies providing or paying for transition services.

## **Access to Confidential Information Related to Student (34 CFR §300.611)**

### **1. Related to the confidentiality of information, the following definitions apply:**

- a. **Destruction** means physical destruction or removal of personal identifiers from information so that the information is no longer personally identifiable.
- b. **Education records** means the type of records covered under the definition of “education records” in 34 CFR Part 99 (the regulations implementing the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. 1232g (“FERPA”).
- c. **Participating agency** means any charter school, agency, or institution that collects, maintains, or uses personally identifiable information, or from which information is obtained, under Part B of the IDEA.
- d. **Personally identifiable** (34 CFR §300.32) means information that has:
  - i. Your child’s name, your name as the parent, or the name of another family member;
  - ii. Your child’s address;
  - iii. A personal identifier, such as your child’s social security number or student number; or
  - iv. A list of personal characteristics or other information that would make it possible to identify your child with reasonable certainty.

### **2. Access Rights (34 CFR §300.613)**

- a. **Parent Access** The cyber charter school must permit you to inspect and review any education records relating to your child that are collected, maintained, or used by the cyber charter school under Part B of the IDEA. The cyber charter school must comply with your request to inspect and review any education records on your child without unnecessary delay or before any meeting regarding an IEP, or any impartial due process hearing (including a resolution meeting or a hearing regarding discipline), and in no case more than 45 calendar days after you have made a request.
  - i. Your right to inspect and review education records includes:
  - ii. Your right to a response from the cyber charter school to your reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records;
  - iii. Your right to request that the charter school provide copies of the records if you cannot effectively inspect and review the records unless you receive those copies; **and**
  - iv. Your right to have your representative inspect and review the records.
    1. The cyber charter school may presume that you have authority to inspect and review records relating to your child unless advised that you do not have the authority under applicable State law governing such matters as guardianship, or separation and divorce.
    2. If any education record includes information on more than one child, the parents of those children have the right to inspect and review only the information relating to their child or to be informed of that specific information.
    3. On request, each cyber charter school must provide you with a list of the types and locations of education records collected, maintained, or used by the cyber charter school.
- b. **Other Authorized Access (34 CFR §300.614)** The cyber charter school must keep a record of parties obtaining access to education records collected, maintained, or used under Part B of the IDEA (except access by parents and authorized employees of the participating agency), including

the name of the party, the date access was given, and the purpose for which the party is authorized to use the records.

3. **Fees** The cyber charter school may charge a fee for copies of records (34 CFR §300.617) that are made for you under Part B of the IDEA, if the fee does not effectively prevent you from exercising your right to inspect and review those records. The cyber charter school may not charge a fee to search for or to retrieve information under Part B of the IDEA.
4. **Amendment of Records at Parent's Request (34 CFR §300.618)** If you believe that information in the education records regarding your child collected, maintained, or used under Part B of the IDEA is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the privacy or other rights of your child, you may request the cyber charter school that maintains the information to change the information. The cyber charter school must decide whether to change the information in accordance with your request within a reasonable period of time of receipt of your request. If the cyber charter school refuses to change the information in accordance with your request, it must inform you of the refusal and advise you of the right to a hearing for this purpose.
5. **Opportunity for a Records Hearing (34 CFR §300.619)** The cyber charter school must, on request, provide you an opportunity for a hearing to challenge information in education records regarding your child to ensure that it is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of your child.
  - a. **Hearing Procedures (34 CFR §300.621)** A hearing to challenge information in education records must be conducted according to the following procedures for such hearings under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. Section 1233g ("FERPA"):
    - i. The educational agency or institution shall hold the hearing within a reasonable time after it has received the request for the hearing from the parent or eligible student.
    - ii. The educational agency or institution shall give the parent or eligible student notice of the date, time, and place, reasonably in advance of the hearing.
    - iii. The hearing may be conducted by any individual, including an official of the educational agency or institution who does not have a direct interest in the outcome of the hearing.
    - iv. The educational agency or institution shall provide the parent or eligible student a full and fair opportunity to present evidence to challenge the content of the student's education records on the grounds that the information contained in the education records is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the privacy rights of the student. The parent or eligible student may, at their own expense, be assisted or represented by one or more individuals of their own choice, including an attorney.
    - v. The educational agency or institution shall determine its decision and reduce that decision to a writing within a reasonable period of time after the hearing.
    - vi. The decision must be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing, and must include a summary of the evidence and the reasons for the decision.
  - c. **Result of Hearing (34 CFR §300.620)** If, as a result of the hearing, the cyber charter school decides that the information is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the child, it must change the information accordingly and inform you in writing. If, as a result of the hearing, the cyber charter school decides that the information is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of your child, you may place in the records that it maintains on your child a statement commenting on the information or providing any reasons you disagree with the decision of the participating agency. Such an explanation placed in the records of your child must:
    - i. Be maintained by the cyber charter school as part of the records of your child as long as the record or con-tested portion is maintained by the participating agency; and

- ii. If the cyber charter school discloses the records of your child or the challenged portion to any party, the explanation must also be disclosed to that party.
- d. **Safeguards (34 CFR §300.623)** Each charter school must protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages. One official at each charter school must assume responsibility for ensuring the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information. All persons collecting or using personally identifiable information must receive training or instruction regarding your State's policies and procedures regarding confidentiality under Part B of the IDEA and FERPA. Each cyber charter school must maintain, for public inspection, a current listing of the names and positions of those employees within the agency who have access to personally identifiable information.
- e. **Destruction of Information (34 CFR §300.624)** The charter school must inform you when personally identifiable information collected, maintained, or used is no longer needed to provide educational services to your child, and the information must be destroyed at your request.  
However, a permanent record of your child's name, address, and phone number, their grades, attendance record, classes attended, grade level completed, and year completed may be maintained without time limitation.

## Public Awareness

The CEO or designee shall ensure that the following public awareness activities occur concerning programs and services for children with disabilities who are applying for enrollment at PA Virtual or who attend PA Virtual. PA Virtual shall publish annually a written notice in means accessible to the PA Virtual families, including, in this Handbook and on the PA Virtual website. The Notice must also be made available in means accessible to the public, such as: at the PA Virtual main office, in the PA Virtual special education office, in a newspaper of general circulation, through local Intermediate Units and/or through other generally accessible print and electronic media, and with the Board meeting minutes a description of: child identification activities, of PA Virtual's special education services and programs, of the manner in which to request services and programs, and of the procedures followed by PA Virtual to ensure the confidentiality of student information pertaining to students with disabilities pursuant to state and federal law.

**For the most current information please refer to the Annual Notification of Rights under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") to Parents and Guardians Regarding the Disclosure of Student "Directory Information" form as posted on the PA Virtual website.**

## Outreach Activities

The CEO or designee shall ensure that the following outreach activities occur concerning programs and services for children with disabilities who attend PA Virtual:

- Offer parents and family (including foster and surrogate parents) information regarding training activities and publicize the availability of such activities to all parents (trainings in the areas of behavior support, response to intervention, inclusive practices, transition, assistive technology, autism, and interagency coordination are important and parents may also be directed to PaTTAN training opportunities). Parent input is to be sought to determine what parent trainings are needed/desired.
- Provide to interested health and mental health professionals, daycare providers, county agency personnel and other interested professionals, including: professionals and agencies who work with homeless and migrant or other highly mobile youth, wards of the state, as well as to students attending private schools (where applicable), information concerning the types of special education programs and

services available in and through PA Virtual and information regarding the manner in which parents can request and access those services.

- Provide or obtain periodic training for PA Virtual's regular education staff and special education staff concerning the identification and evaluation of, and provision of special education programs and services to students with disabilities.
- PA Virtual staff members will work together to identify and support homeless children as per the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. This process includes ensuring students receive the services they need, educating parents/guardians about a student's educational rights, and providing assistance to health/mental health professionals and county agency personnel.
- PA Virtual shall conduct child find activities to inform the public of its special education services and programs and the manner in which to request them.
- PA Virtual's child find effort must include information regarding potential signs of developmental delays and other risk factors that could indicate disabilities.
- Efforts must be made to identify applicants and enrolled students who have a native language other than English and to ensure that notices and other outreach efforts are available to them in their native language as required by law and unless it is clearly and absolutely not feasible to do so.

## Screening

The CEO or designee shall establish a system of screening in order to:

- Identify and provide screening for students prior to referral for an initial special education multidisciplinary team evaluation;
- Provide peer support for teachers and other staff members to assist them in working effectively with students in the general education curriculum;
- Conduct hearing and vision screening in accordance with the Public School Code of 1949 for the purpose of identifying students with hearing or vision difficulty so that they can be referred for assistance or recommended for evaluation for special education if necessary;
- Identify students who may need special education services and programs.
- Maintain the confidentiality of information in accordance with applicable state and federal regulations.

## Pre-Evaluation Screening

The pre-evaluation screening process shall include:

- For students with academic concerns, an assessment of the student's functioning in the curriculum including curriculum-based or performance-based assessments;
- For students with behavioral concerns, a systematic observation of the student's behavior in the classroom or area in which the student is displaying difficulty ("FBA" or functional behavior assessment);
- An intervention based on the results of the assessments conducted;
- An assessment of the student's response to the intervention;
- A determination of whether or not the assessed difficulties of the student are the result of a lack of instruction or limited English proficiency;
- A determination of whether or not the student's needs exceed the functional capacity of the regular education program, without special education programs and services, to maintain the student at an instructional level appropriate to the level and pace of instruction provided in that program;
- Activities designed to gain the participation of parents;
- Controls to ensure that if screening activities have produced little or no improvement within the specified time frame after initiation, the student shall be referred for a multidisciplinary team evaluation.

- The screening activities shall not serve as a bar to the right of a parent to request a multidisciplinary team evaluation at any time. When the completion of screening activities prior to referral for a multi-disciplinary team evaluation will result in serious mental or physical harm, or significant educational regression, to the student or others, PA Virtual may initiate a multidisciplinary team reevaluation without completion of the screening process. Whenever an evaluation is conducted without a pre-evaluation screening, the activities described shall be completed as part of that evaluation whenever possible. PA Virtual will also provide 504 Plans for students who have disabilities or impairments within the meaning of Section 504 that substantially limits the students learning or other major life activity. PA Virtual will utilize the definition of “substantially limits” as provided by the EEOC regulations under the ADA on the basis of individual inquiry for each student. This includes whether the individual student is (a) unable to perform a major life activity that the average person in the general population can perform or (b) significantly restricted as to the condition, manner, or duration under which the person can perform, in comparison with the average person in the general population. The definition of a physical or mental impairment and of a major life activity may be found at the Section 504 regulation at 34 C.F.R. 104.3( j)(2)(i) and (ii) respectively. Students may be considered to be disabled even though they do not require services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004).
- Parents who think their child may have a disability or may be eligible for special education may request, at any time, that PA Virtual conduct a Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation. **Requests for a Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation must be made in writing to the CEO of PA Virtual.**

## Section XI: Acknowledgements and Agreements

The completion and submission of the form, found at the link below, is affirming agreement with the policies and procedures set forth. I/we acknowledge that I/we have read, understood, and fully comply with the content, requirements, and expectations of the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct. I/we agree to abide by the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct as a condition of my child's admission with PA Virtual Charter School and for the duration of my child's enrollment with PA Virtual Charter School. I further affirm and:

- Release the School and its personnel from any and all claims and damages of any nature arising from my child's use of, or inability to use, the school network or the Internet, but not limited to claims that may arise from the unauthorized use of the system to purchase products or services.
- Understand that from time-to-time the school may wish to publish examples of student projects, photographs of students, and other work on an Internet accessible worldwide web server. I also understand that I may rescind this release, at any time, and for any reason, by contacting my assigned Family Support Coordinator (FSC), via email and providing such a request in writing.
- Give permission for [(student name)] to access, produce, and communicate information on the Internet. I understand and agree that the misuse of this privilege by my child will terminate their access to the School network and the Internet.

I/we understand that if I/we have questions, at any time, regarding the Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct, I/we will consult a member of the PA Virtual Enrollment team or my student's academic program Principal. If a student is 18 years old, they may sign the handbook on their own behalf.

Name of Parent/Learning Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

As an alternative to physically signing ("wet signing"), typing names on the linked form below will be an efficient way to submit the requested acknowledgement. Completing the linked form below will have the same effect and authority as signing a paper document.

<https://goo.gl/forms/5ww6P8rZ4pvjBOfk1>