

DISTANCE EDUCATION **(Including Virtual Schools/Online Learning)**

343.7

Online Education Policy

The School District of Phillips recognizes that delivery of educational options continues to evolve as technology provides access to relevant instructional materials that may not (or no longer) be available via a local source. Online instruction is viewed as a supplement to permit the School District of Phillips to enhance or expand course offerings, or to provide an alternative learning environment better suited to the learning needs of some students.

The following guidelines are based upon a number of principles identified as relevant to the fair, appropriate and effective use of online courses. Educators in the district shall:

1. Make effective use of the potential that online instruction offers for students.
2. Ensure quality of content and professional educator involvement.
3. Safeguard equal educational opportunities.
4. Recognize that some essential skills and understandings are best learned in a face-to-face setting.

Enrollment

Participation in an online course will be voluntary.

Students must be enrolled in the district to take advantage of online course work. Students must apply for permission to take online course work. The application must be completed by December 1 of each school year for second semester consideration. The deadline for first semester is May 1 of the previous academic year. These dates may be modified for extenuating circumstances.

Students must complete prerequisites and provide teacher/counselor recommendations to confirm that the student possesses the maturity level needed to function effectively in an online learning environment. In addition, approval by the building principal shall be obtained before a student enrolls in an online course. Online course work as part of an educational plan (special education, gifted/talents, 504, at-risk, ESL) will have to be approved by the plan team.

Students may take online courses off campus or on campus with the approval of the building administrator or the director of pupil services. Students working on course requirements at home will be in compliance with the compulsory attendance law. To meet the minimum attendance requirements, students must comply with timelines that have been established by the course supervisor and approved by administration.

Grading

The school must receive an official record of the final grade before credit is determined. All grades received as a result of the student taking an approved online course will be

recorded on the student's official transcript. Grades received for online courses will be used in the calculation of grade point averages or class rank.

Credit/Course Enrollment

Credit for an online course may be earned only in the following circumstances:

1. A district school does not offer the course.
2. Although the course is offered at the School District of Phillips, the student will not be able to take it due to an unavoidable scheduling conflict or special circumstances.
3. The course is needed as a supplement to extend homebound instruction.
4. The student has been expelled from the regular school setting, but educational services are continued with School Board approval through the expulsion order.
5. The building administrator or director of pupil services, with agreement from the student's teachers and parents/guardians, determines if the student requires a differentiated or accelerated learning environment.

Courses must meet the board-approved graduation requirements.

Student Expectations

Students participating in online school programs are viewed in the same manner as regularly attending students and are expected to abide by the rules and regulations set by the school board for all School District of Phillips students. Violations of school rules will be reviewed and handled by a school administrator.

Students are expected to abide by and follow the guidelines set forth in the School District of Phillips's Communication and Computer Technology Student Behavior & Acceptable Use Policy (#361.4). The student and parent must sign, date, and return the signature page of this policy prior to course enrollment.

For seniors taking courses needed to meet graduation requirements, the course must be completed two weeks prior to graduation in order to fulfill the graduation credit and be consistent with the graduation policy.

Online Course Vendors

1. Courses must be recognized by CESA or DPI. Vendors must be approved by the superintendent or designee.
2. The building administrator or his/her designee will determine the maximum number of credits a student can earn online.
3. The courses must be similar to those listed in the School District of Phillips academic course selection books in terms of curricular content, graduation requirements, and alignment to state and national standards. Exceptions could be made for the online courses used in credit recovery/remediation with the approval of the building administrator or his/her designee.

Payment of Fees/Hardware

Coursework taken for credit by students enrolled in the District will have no fee. Students who withdraw from an online course after the drop date will be subject to pay for the course fee. Students who take coursework without enrolling will pay the fee of the course taken.

The School District of Phillips will not provide equipment for home instruction nor pay for home internet access or technical assistance.

*Cross Reference: #343.1 Youth Options
#343.42 Internet Courses*

Approved: May 16, 2011