



**7th-12th Grade
Student/Parent Virtual
Course Handbook**

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Introduction

This guide is for parents/guardians considering enrolling their child in the Ozark Virtual School (OVS) provided by Ozark School District. In the pages that follow, you will find information about the:

- Profile and expectations of an online learner.
- Basic virtual learning procedures and practices.
- Resources and supports Ozark School District provides virtual learners.
- Processes to enroll in virtual courses.

Senate Bill 603 at a Glance

In the spring of 2018, Senate Bill 603 passed expanding the online learning opportunities for Missouri students. Highlights of this legislation are below.

- The school district must adopt a policy that creates a process for students to enroll in virtual courses and may include consulting with a school counselor.
- The school district must pay for eligible K-12 students to take virtual courses as long as the student:
 - Resides in the district.
 - Is currently enrolled in the district.
 - Was enrolled full-time in a public school the previous semester.
- School districts are not required to pay for courses beyond full-time enrollment. Therefore, if a student is already enrolled in seven courses in a semester during the regular year (or two courses during the summer school session), the district is not required to pay for additional classes.
- School districts are able to determine a student's eligibility to enroll in an online course and can refuse enrollment based on the "best educational interest of the child" in accordance with 161.670 RSMo and School Board policy IGCD.

What is Ozark Virtual School?

The OVS mission is to offer Ozark students access to high-quality courses and interactive virtual learning that is neither time nor place dependent—taught by highly qualified and experienced Ozark teachers.

Ozark School District wants to offer a virtual learning option for families who prefer an alternate learning environment. Using the OVS learning platform, students can take courses from any internet-connected computer, available 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

OVS is operated and overseen by Ozark School District and is currently offered in grades first through high school. Depending upon staff availability and student requests, a student may be able to complete all academic requirements online. OVS courses are designed by Ozark staff and aligned to district and state standards. A formal review process is built into all course development to ensure high quality and rigor.

What is MOCAP? Who is the Preferred Provider?

Local school districts and charter schools may use a preferred online provider. The Ozark School District's preferred provider, if not choosing Ozark Virtual School (OVS), is Missouri Connections. Missouri Connections is partnered with Ozark to offer a variety of high-quality courses.

Why Consider Virtual Learning?

Students take virtual courses for a variety of reasons. It expands the range of courses and opportunities for some students, particularly if a student cannot access an in-person course due to scheduling conflicts. Other students may use virtual course opportunities for credit recovery, as a viable homebound option or they may simply prefer the virtual learning format.

From a student's point of view, virtual learning may be attractive because:

- It fits the student's schedule meeting individual needs and learning goals.
- It is relevant to the online life many students lead.
- It is available to students 24 hours a day.

Profile of a Successful Virtual Student

There are many considerations when determining whether a student is well-suited to a virtual learning environment. Parents and students should be aware that virtual courses are equal or exceed those of traditional in-person courses. Virtual instruction places much more responsibility on the student. A student should plan to spend at least one hour a day, five days a week, on each course. In other words, at least five hours per week on each course. This is similar to the amount of time a student would spend in a course at Ozark's "brick and mortar" schools. Instructors with virtual teaching experience agree that students who are typically successful at virtual learning have the following critical characteristics:

- Good Time Management - Can the student create and maintain a study schedule throughout the semester without face-to-face interaction with a teacher?
- Effective Communication - Can the student ask for help, make contact with other students and/or instructors online, and ask questions regarding the learning materials using email?
- Independent Study Habits - Can the student study and complete assignments without direct supervision and maintain the self-discipline necessary to complete work?
- Self-Motivation - Does the student have a strong desire to learn in a virtual environment?
- Academic Readiness - Does the student have the basic reading, writing, math, and computer literacy skills to succeed in a virtual learning environment?

- Technology Proficiency - Can the student open, create and save documents, use various technology tools, and identify file formats (e.g., doc, xls, pdf, jpg)?

Making the Decision

In the process of deciding a student's readiness to enroll in virtual classes, the parent and student must decide if virtual learning is the most effective way to learn. Here are additional questions to consider.

Technology

- What are the technical requirements for the courses the student wants/needs to take?
- Can the parent/guardian provide the internet access the student needs?
- How technologically savvy are the parents and students?

Learning Environment

- Is there a quiet area in the home where the student can work, or does the student have easy access to a facility that provides this environment (such as the public library)?
- Is there a regular, designated time of day where the student may work on the course(s)?
- Is the student willing and able to ask for help when needed?

Considering the Course

- Does the course meet the student's academic goals?
- Does the student need this course to meet graduation requirements?
- Are there prerequisites for the course? Has the student met these requirements?
- For potential Division I and II student-athletes, does the course meet NCAA Eligibility Requirements?

Enrollment Procedures

In order to enroll in a virtual course under the provisions of Senate Bill 603, students must be a resident in the Ozark School District and enroll in the district.

- Upon determining that online learning is a viable option for a student, parents should contact their building's counselor to enroll.
- A meeting will be scheduled with the student's counselor to determine the student's eligibility. The school district may deny a request to enroll in a virtual course at district cost if one or more of the following is true:
 - The student has failed or did not receive a passing grade in a previous virtual course(s).
 - Other factors indicate the virtual learning placement is not in the educational best interest of the student.

OVS Calendar

Ozark Virtual School follows the same calendar as Ozark School District's in-person [calendar](#).

Homeschool Students

Homeschool students may enroll in the Ozark Virtual School.

- The student must reside in the district and provide proof of residency.
- The student must enroll in OVS courses only and are not eligible for district-pay MOCAP courses until they've attended Ozark School District for at least one semester.
- The student must meet all of the OVS expectations.

Transitioning to Seated Instruction

Should the student and parents decide to transition back to a seated learning environment after attending virtual courses, they will need to work through the building principal and counselor to transition back to in-person courses.

Late Enrollment

If a student begins the semester with in-person courses and then prefers virtual courses with OVS, they may enroll beginning the next quarter. Space and course availability may be limited.

OVS Attendance Expectations

In an effort to maintain accurate attendance records for virtual courses, student login is monitored weekly by the Ozark School District.

- A student is considered a “no-show” if he or she has not logged into and participated in their course within five days without prior approval. If this occurs, the student will transition to in-person learning.
- Without prior approval, if a student has failed to log in and participate in their virtual classes for 15 days and the teacher has been unable to make any contact with the student or family, the teacher will alert the counselor. An educational neglect hotline call may be placed with the Division of Child Services.

Progress Monitoring & Grading

In order to monitor their student's progress, parents are provided parent observer accounts in Canvas Learning Platform. Parents will be able to view their student's grades, assignments, events, and course interactions. Grading policies will be communicated through the course syllabus.

Supporting an OVS Student

Throughout the student's participation in the virtual course, it is best practice to do the following:

- Set up a study space that includes the required technology
- Be prepared for technical issues that may arise
- Review the syllabus with the student
- Define expectations for when and where the student will work on the course
- Reinforce that virtual courses are as important as in-person courses and become a part of the educational record
- Help the student to establish a routine for working in an online environment
- Monitor the student's progress
- Contact the student's teacher to discuss absences or for other learning questions

Getting Started After Enrollment

Prior to Day 1

- The building counselor will provide the student with an enrollment notification; it includes login information and a course list.
- Ensure the necessary devices are charged and ready to go.

Day 1

- All OVS courses are offered through Canvas, login to the Canvas Learning Platform.
- Watch the introductory announcement for the course(s).

Throughout the Course

- Start each learning day by checking the Canvas inbox.
- Read recent feedback given by the teacher.
- Check the calendar for due dates.
- Keep a steady work schedule throughout each module.

Additional Support

- Students and teachers can send messages to one another through the Inbox feature in Canvas. The typical response time is within 24 hours, Monday-Friday.
- Video announcements may be posted weekly on the course homepage and provide information for the week, including the teacher's office hours.
- Teachers may host video conference opportunities for the whole class, small groups, and individual students. These conferences are recorded and available for a student to watch later. *It is important to note that these conferences should not be shared via other social media platforms.*
- Teachers will make weekly contact with parents if a student is inactive or failing.

Navigating Canvas

Ozark Virtual School uses Canvas as the learning platform for all virtual classes. The following features may be helpful to the student and parent.

Announcements: OVS teachers may post a video announcement every week. Students should watch these for important information regarding the course.

Feedback: Teachers provide feedback through scoring guides and comments. Students should read and respond to the feedback in order to enhance their performance in the course.

Instructor Information: Relevant instructor information is provided on the Canvas course home page.

To Do: In this section, the student will find a list of assignments and due dates. The list is located on the course homepage and leads the student to videos, discussion boards, and other assignments. The calendar tab also provides a list of due dates.

Grades: The grades tab allows the student to see current progress in the OVS course and see the teacher's feedback comments. Please note: The grades shown in Canvas will not be immediately available in the SIS Parent Portal grade book.

Syllabus: This link provides the syllabus for the course. It outlines the course's major topics and units of study.

Google Drive: Students may use Google Drive to complete many of the assignments and may use Google files to upload assignments into Canvas.

Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes any of the following: cheating on tests, assignments, projects, or similar activities; plagiarism; claiming credit for another person's work; fabrication of facts, sources, or other supporting material; unauthorized collaboration; facilitating academic dishonesty; and other misconduct related to academics.

Should it be found that a student has been academically dishonest, the consequences will be applied:

First Offense: No credit for the work, grade reduction, or replacement assignment

Subsequent Offences: No credit for the work, grade reduction, course failure, or removal from extracurricular activities. See School Board policy [IG-R1](#).

State Testing

All OVS students must participate in the required State of Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) testing. MAP tests measure a student's progress toward mastery of the state's educational Show-Me Standards. **All testing is conducted in person, in a specified Ozark building.**

- **MAP Grade-Level Assessment:** All Missouri students in grades 3-8 must take the MAP test in communication arts and math. Students in either 5th and 8th grades must also take the MAP test in science.
- **EOC Assessment:** End-of-Course assessments must be taken when a student has received instruction on the course-level expectations for an assessment, regardless of grade level. EOC tests are required in Algebra I, Biology, English II, and Government.

IEP/504 Students

Instructors are trained to accommodate students' needs. Before enrollment in virtual coursework, the student's IEP/504 team will assist the family to determine the student's eligibility. Depending upon the student's specific needs, the IEP/504 team may meet to discuss whether online coursework is appropriate. If the IEP/504 team determines the student may enroll in online coursework, the school's process coordinator will email the student's virtual learning team. Accommodations will be made accordingly.

Graduation Requirements

To earn an Ozark School District diploma, students must successfully complete 30 credit requirements defined in the [Ozark High School Course Planner](#).

Students and parents should work closely with the school counselor to ensure the student is on track to graduate.

Senior Information

The senior year is a busy time for students and families, and there are many deadlines involved in end of the year activities and graduation. It is the student's and parents' responsibility to keep up-to-date on senior deadlines and expectations. Specific questions can be sent to the senior counselor or administrator.

A+ Program

Students enrolled in the A+ program who take virtual courses will have attendance recorded at 95%, thereby allowing them to meet the A+ program attendance requirements. Students enrolled in in-person coursework will have the attendance recorded based on actual seat time. Regardless of whether a student is enrolled in virtual or in-person coursework, all A+ program expectations apply. For additional information regarding the A+ Program, visit the [Missouri Department of Higher Education website](#).

School Athletics and Activities

Students who would like to participate in activities or sports at Ozark School District must meet the requirements outlined in Section 2 of the MSHSAA Handbook, entitled *Student Essential By-Laws*.

A student who is already enrolled in Ozark School District and enrolls in virtual classes through OVS may meet eligibility requirements outlined in By-Law 2.3.2 through meeting ALL of the following:

- The student is an enrolled student of the public middle/high school of residence, as defined in By-Law 3.10, and is taking a minimum of six credit-bearing, seat-time, or virtual classes for a minimum of three units of credit at the school.
- All classes/assignments must be completed by the high school/middle school's close of the semester, as per By-Law 2.3.11, in order for those classes/credits to be considered toward activity eligibility.
- To be eligible in the following semester, students must earn a minimum of three full credits the semester prior.

Homeschool students may participate in athletics/activities if they enroll in a minimum of two credit-bearing seat time or virtual classes. All classes must be completed by the end of the semester. To be eligible the following semester, students must earn a minimum of three full credits the semester prior and have passed the two virtual classes.

Parents are strongly encouraged to review the [MSHSAA handbook](#) for further clarification regarding eligibility. For specific questions, please contact Gerald Chambers, Executive Director of Secondary Education, at geraldchambers@ozarktigers.org.

Contacts

Building Counselors

In office from August 2-June 9

High School			
Counseling Secretary	Janae Kondracki	janaekondracki@ozarktigers.org	417-582-5710
Finley River			
Building Secretary	Deborah Parrish	deborahparrish@ozarktigers.org	417-582-5716
Junior High			
Counseling Secretary	Stephanie Kronebusch	stephaniekronebusch@ozarktigers.org	417-582-4718
Middle School			
Building Secretary	Debbie Yake	debbieyake@ozarktigers.org	417-582-4819

Digital Learning Support:
Contact your child's teacher

Direct additional questions to:

District Office			
	Executive Director of Elementary Education:		
	Kent Sappington	kentsappington@ozarktigers.org	417-582-5966
	Executive Director of Secondary Education:		
	Gerald Chambers	geraldchambers@ozarktigers.org	417-582-5962
	Virtual Learning and Data Specialist		
	Rachelle Bell	rachellebell@ozarktigers.org	417-582-5958



Request to Enroll in Virtual Course(s) Through Ozark Virtual School

Ozark Virtual School is an online learning program designed, developed, and taught by Ozark teachers utilizing high-quality courses

Name of online course	Semester	Ozark OVS Course	Course Code	# of credits (1 or 2)

Parent/student, please initial ALL of the following to indicate you have read and understand:

____ To be successful in an online course, a student must have good computer skills, time-management skills, persistence, and good written communication skills.

____ All Ozark R-VI School District online course follow the same school calendar as seated courses. Students enrolled in OVS courses are expected to complete all course requirements by the end of the semester as stated in the Ozark R-VI School District calendar.

____ Students who enroll in OVS courses are expected to actively participate in those courses with the goal of completing the course. If a student does not actively participate in a course or is not successful in a course, the district may remove the student from the OVS course.

____ While taking a OVS course the Ozark R-VI School District, monitors and provides accommodations specified in the student’s IEP or 504 plan and/or ELL support.

____ The student is responsible for understanding how educational choices, including the decision to take a OVS course may impact MSHSAA eligibility

Please complete the information below as a part of the enrollment process.

School: _____

Student Name(First, Middle, Last): _____

Grade Level: _____

Does the student have an IEP (circle one)? Yes No

Does the student have a 504 (circle one)? Yes No

Parent/Guardian Name(First, Last): _____

Parent/Guardian Phone Number(444-444-4444): _____

Parent/Guardian Email: _____

Parent/Guardian Address: _____

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Principal Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Learning Plans [7th Grade](#), [8th Grade](#)

All Virtual students must have an ICAP or Individual Learning Plan on file.

OFFICE USE ONLY

Approved by: _____

Denied by: _____ Reason: _____