



EST. 2020

**PIONEER VIRTUAL
ACADEMY**

2020-2021

HANDBOOK

Mission

By providing a rigorous, relevant, and state accredited, technology-based education, Pioneer Virtual Academy prepares students for college and careers where they will become lifelong learners and contributors to a global society.

Beliefs

- We believe all students can learn.
- We believe that the school staff should be connected with students and their families because learning is a shared responsibility for which the school, home, students, and community are jointly responsible.
- We believe student engagement is crucial to success and students should have access to a safe, secure, and supportive environment.
- We believe every student deserves a rigorous, relevant, and accredited learning experience.
- We believe it is important for students to take ownership of their own learning in order to gain the most from every learning opportunity.
- We believe technology is a progressive learning tool that provides opportunities for students to reach their greatest potential.
- We believe every student is unique and can benefit from a tailored learning plan that meets their individual needs.

Scope and Delivery

Instruction is delivered virtually through the Learning Management System (LMS), Educere. Students will participate exclusively in virtual learning, which encompasses virtual learning with parent support, with parents acting as the student's Learning Coach. Each student and his/her parents will develop a customized educational plan with the site coordinator to meet the students individual needs. All courses are state accredited and approved by the Lawrence County Board of Education.

Learning Coach: Role of Parent/Guardian within the PVA setting/environment

Parents or Guardians will serve as Learning Coaches for students. The younger the students, the more involved the Learning Coach will be.

Learning Coaches will help monitor student progress and grades. Learning Coaches will also help students learn and implement organizational skills to help students stay on track in their school work. It is not the responsibility of the Learning Coach to complete work for students nor to provide answers. Learning is achieved by experiencing both success and failure.

Accreditation

This non-traditional, virtual program is state accredited and taught by highly qualified, certified teachers. Courses are aligned to Tennessee State Standards, thus leading to a high school diploma upon completion of the program.

Enrollment Fees

Pioneer Virtual Academy courses are free for full-time enrolled students who meet residency requirements outlined by the Lawrence County Board of Education. Full time students may take up to four classes per semester for a total of eight courses per year free of charge. Additional courses above full time enrollment may be subject to tuition fees.

Application Process

- Complete application
- Technology insurance fee \$100
- Complete transcript review with Pioneer Virtual Academy Coordinator
- Establish Individual Learning Plan (Attendance, Participation, Achievement)
- Attend technology orientation (first week of enrollment)
- Maintain a minimum average on all coursework based on Individualized Learning Plan

Admission

Virtual Learning

Students admitted to the virtual learning program must be highly motivated and self-disciplined. Students must take initiative and ownership of their own learning in order to be successful in this type of program. Students must be in good standing at their current school and must have acceptable discipline records. Students must maintain a minimum average (as outlined in their personal learning plan) in all courses in order to maintain an exclusively “virtual” status. Students must also be in good standing with regard to truancy. Non-traditional attendance is measured through the completion of lessons/assignments consistent with the students customized learning plan. Students are required to remain on pace and must complete all assignments with a minimum score of 80 to be considered present and attending. In the event that a student does not meet the grade or truancy requirements then the student will have to attend in person sessions (4 sessions per week) at the PVA Learning Lab until the issues are rectified. Once assignments are caught up and grades are satisfactory in each course then students may return to virtual status. In the event that a solution cannot be reached where the student maintains satisfactory progress in each course or continues to have truancy issues, then the student may be withdrawn to traditional school for in-person learning. It is our goal to retain all students in the virtual learning program and we will make every effort to help students meet the requirements of successful virtual learning.

Blended Learning

A student may attend CTE classes with district high schools so they may get hands on experience in technical classes. These classes serve as electives. Students must adhere to local high school attendance requirements for the classes and must follow school procedures for signing in at that school.

Learning Lab

Pioneer Virtual Academy Learning Lab will be available to students who have a need for extra support. Students and Parents may schedule time in the lab for help with the PVA Coordinator for Onsite Tutoring. The lab may also be used for students who are not maintaining their percentage complete that is expected or who do not maintain satisfactory progress or grades.

Upon enrollment, students and their Learning Coach, will be required to attend one (1) orientation session. In this session, students will be able to pick up devices and will participate in an introduction to the Learning Management System.

The development of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) will also be developed for each student before virtual classes begin.

Testing

The Pioneer Virtual Academy is governed by the policies and procedures of Lawrence County Schools set forth by the Lawrence County Board of Education regarding state mandated testing policies. Students are also required to take final exams in each course with the exception of those courses that have a state required EOC test where the EOC will serve as the final exam. There are no exemptions granted for final exams/EOC tests. These exams will count, when applicable for 15% of the students' semester average for the course. Final Exams and state EOC tests must be administered by a licensed Lawrence County employee in a proctored setting.

End of Course/TN Ready

End of Course exams will be administered at the completion of courses as determined by the Tennessee Department of Education. These exams will count as 15% of the final grade, in accordance with district policy.

Biology U. S. History Geometry Algebra 1 Algebra 2 English 9 & 10

ACT

This test is mandatory for all 11th grade students. It will be given on a school day and scores will be reportable for college admission. There is no cost to the student for school day testing. The ACT is also a state graduation requirement.

United State Civics Test

All students are given the US Civics test in each grade level in a social science/studies course until passing the test with a minimum of 70. This test can be taken each year of high school (grades 9-12) until the student earns a passing grade.

Attendance Requirements

During the first week of enrollment, all students are required to attend Technology Orientation. This allows the staff to get to know the students and their needs as well as familiarize them with the learning management program.

Exclusively “virtual” students must maintain their pace completing assignments and maintaining their percent complete. Simply logging in does not satisfy attendance. Students must complete assignments satisfactorily in order to be considered present for attendance purposes. Students and Parents can monitor progress through the learning management system. A student is considered “truant” when they are more than 15% off pace without a legitimate reason or approval absences from the PVA Coordinator. Students who are truant or failing to meet the grade requirements will be required to attend in-person sessions until they are caught up and/or meeting the grade requirement. If the student is not making satisfactory progress in the “virtual” program then they may be transitioned to the blended program where on-site support is provided in person.

Repeated truant issues or off pace with course completion as outlined by the PVA Coordinator and PVA guidelines may result in removal from PVA after intervention measures have failed to correct the issue.

Truancy

Percentage Off-Pace in the course	Intervention
5%	Teacher will communicate directly with the student and parent/guardian that the student is off pace.
10%	Program Director or designee will send an official notification to the student and parent/guardian that the student is off-pace.
15%	Program Director or designee will send an official notification to the student and parent/guardian that the student is truant and in violation of Tennessee’s Compulsory School Attendance Law. Such notification will result in the student and the parent/guardian being petitioned to juvenile court. Additionally, virtual and /or blended school students will be required to attend on-site meetings daily until the student is caught up and back on pace. Then the student may return to their original status on a probationary period. At this time, virtual students may be transitioned to the blended program if it is in the best interest of the student.

Truancy (Continued)

Students in the blended learning program are also required to attend classes in person if they are taking them at a traditional facility. For instance, a student who is signed up for an elective class at LCHS will follow the same attendance guidelines as a traditional student for that class. Once a student has accumulated 3, 5, 10 unexcused absences then the Program Director or designee will send an official notification to the parent/guardian which will include the Lawrence County Schools Truancy Policy and the Tennessee Compulsory School Attendance Law. Once a student has accumulated 10 unexcused absences the Program Director or designee will send an official notification to the student and parent/guardian that the student is truant and in violation of Tennessee's Compulsory School Attendance Law. Such notification will result in the student and the parent/guardian being petitioned to juvenile court.

Internet Use and School Issued Devices

Internet access is required for all students and must be provided by students. Students are expected to use the internet in a responsible, safe, and ethical manner. Use of the internet must be in accordance with the Lawrence County Acceptable Use Policy. Parents and students are required to sign the Lawrence County Acceptable Use Policy upon enrollment. Devices shall be returned at the end of each school year or if a student withdraws prior to the end of school and transfers to a school outside of Lawrence County Schools. Records, including grades may be held until devices are returned in satisfactory condition. Students may elect to use personal devices or one provided by LCSS. Those devices provided by the district will require a \$100 deposit which will be refunded when the device is returned.

Withdrawal/Cancellation of Enrollment

Students may be withdrawn from courses and transitioned back to traditional school for the following reasons:

- The student has made no significant progress in his or her courses during the first 2 weeks of enrollment.
- The student has extensive virtual or blended truancy issues and needs the accountability of daily physical attendance at a traditional setting or school.
- The student no longer attends Pioneer Virtual Academy.
- The student no longer qualifies for enrollment because they do not meet established grade requirements as outlined in their individualized learning plan.

Graduation Requirements

The Lawrence County Virtual School curriculum is designed to challenge students and prepare them for college and the workforce while providing flexibility in scheduling and pacing. Students are required to take 4 courses each semester (8 total for the year) and must meet the minimum state requirements of **28** credits to graduate. Once students have fulfilled the minimum **28** credit requirement they will be eligible to graduate with their high school diploma from Lawrence County Schools. Graduation ceremonies are held each year to recognize the accomplishments of these students.

Math (4 credits)	English (4 credits)	Science (3 credits)	Social Studies (3 credits)	Additional Credits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Algebra I ● Algebra II ● Geometry ● Higher level math course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● English I ● English II ● English III ● English IV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lab Science ● Biology ● Chemistry or Physics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● World History/Geo ● U.S. History ● U.S. Government (1/2 cr.) ● Economics (1/2 cr.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physical Education (1/2 cr.) ● Wellness ● Personal Finance (1/2 cr.) ● Foreign Language (2 cr.) ● Fine Art ● Elective Focus (3 credits in the same area)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students who wish to waive the foreign language and fine art requirement must fill out a waiver and substitute the with courses that explore their elective focus. ● State mandated EOC tests are administered in the following classes: Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, English I, English II, Biology, and U.S. History. 				

Grading/GPA Information

Grading Scale

A = 100 - 93 B = 92 - 85 C = 84 - 75 D = 74 - 70 F = Below 70

Code of Honor - Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is fundamental to a successful non-traditional learning experience and mastery of the standards. In order to protect the validity of the student's intellectual work, students should complete all work without unauthorized help of any kind. Academic integrity means the following:

1. The student will complete each assignment independently and without help.
2. The student will not practice plagiarism in any form.
3. The student will not cheat in any form.
4. The student will not allow others to copy their work.
5. The student will not misuse content from the Internet.

Students in violation of academic integrity may receive a grade of 0% on all assignments submitted in violation of the policy. In addition, students may be withdrawn from the course and/or school if the policy is violated.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Glossary of Terms

- **Academic Focus** - area of focus for high school students outside of the basic, required classes. Generally related to a specific area of interest or career field.
- **Blended Learning** - participating in both virtual learning and in-person learning in the same grading period
- **Graduation Requirements** - 28 earned credits, take ACT, Civics exam
- **ILP - Individualized Learning Plan** - a learning plan that is written for each student to address their academic needs. Much like an educational contract between Parents, Students, & School.
- **Learning Coach** - the role of the parent or guardian in a student's virtual learning experience.
- **Learning Management System** - Virtual Program used for PVA curriculum. Educere provides Founders curriculum and teachers for PVA students.
- **PVA Coordinator** - person of contact at Pioneer Virtual Academy. Handles all student enrollment, academic, and technology
- **PVA Orientation** - a scheduled session where students & parents are introduced to the virtual program & technology associated with it
- **Resident Requirements** - prospective students must reside in Lawrence County per LCSS Board of Education policy
- **State Mandated Testing:**
 - EOC (End of Course) for certain high school courses and
 - TNReady for grades 3-8
- **Waiver** - a form provided by the TN Dept of Education that waives a class requirement (such as foreign language class requirements)