

Holton Public Schools

An Online Virtual Academy  
Program



Student and Parent Handbook  
2023-2024

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## **School Mission**

"It is the mission of Holton Public Schools to provide the students of our district with a high quality and rigorous 21<sup>st</sup> century learning experience, that is engaging, yet personalized, while providing flexibility to students, to ensure that we meet the needs of individual students within our school district."

**Learning in a Virtual Model** - The online virtual learning program created through Holton Public Schools. Students will have access to the learning environment 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Unlike traditional high school, you will only visit campus for student mentoring support with your coursework, while completing the rest of your coursework through an online virtual course provider. During the time that is spent on site, you will receive help on assignments, take part in learning assignments that are best suited for a face to face setting, and will complete assessments that are required to be proctored. Learning in an online model such as this can be challenging for some individuals and may not necessarily be suited to meet the needs of all students.

**Holton High School Handbook** — This handbook and document is meant to serve as an addendum to the Holton High School Handbook. All policies presented within the Holton High School Handbook will apply to students attending the online virtual academy program, where applicable.

**Accessing Your Course** — To access your course, you must first complete the registration and orientation process so that you can be registered for the appropriate courses. Upon doing so, you will be issued login credentials where you may access your online course through the online course provider.

Students may select from a series of differentiated courses based upon their reading level, all of which are highly aligned to the Michigan Merit Curriculum and the Common Core State Standards, as required by state law. Students may select from Foundations, Literacy Advantage, Core, or Honors courses based upon need and assessment scores.

### **Graduation Requirements:**

- Language Arts: (4 Credits)
- Mathematics: (4 Credits) - Including the successful completion of at least algebra 1, geometry, and algebra 2, and an additional math credit, Of a retake of algebra 2. A pupil must successfully complete a math or math-related credit during his or her final year of high school.
- Science: (3 Credits) - Including the successful completion of 1 credit of biology, 1/2 credit of chemistry, 1/2 credit of physics, an additional 1/2 credit of either chemistry or physics, and an additional 1/2 credit of science. Physical science can also be used to satisfy this requirement.

- Social Studies: (3 Credits) - Including completion of at least 1 credit in United States history, 1 credit in world history, 1/2 credit in economics, and 1/2 credit in government.
- Visual, Performing, & Applied Arts: (1 Credit) - Including the completion of at least 1 credit from one of the following: aft appreciation of music appreciation.
- Physical Education/ Health: (1 Credit)
- World Language: (2 Credits) — Students may select from French, German, or Spanish. Other world language selections may be possible upon request.
- Career Foundations and Exploration: (1 credit) — Includes work experience and job training for workplace readiness, college application and readiness, or military assessment and readiness.

The online course or learning experience required of students by the Michigan Merit Curriculum for students in grades 7-12 is considered to be fulfilled through standard programming for all enrolled students in this program. Credits Total: 19 Credits

Course Offerings:

English / Language Arts 4 credits	Mathematics 4 credits	Science 3 credits	Social Studies 3 credits	World Language 2 credits	Health / PE 1 credit	Visual, Performing, Applied Art 1 credit	Career Foundations and Exploration 1 credit
English Foundations	Math Foundations	Science Foundations	US History	French I	Physical Education	Art Appreciation	Career Preparation 1
English 9: Introduction to Literature Composition	Algebra I	Physical Science	World History	French II	Health	Music Appreciation	Career Preparation 2
English 10 Critical Reading and Effective Writing	Algebra II	Biology	Civics				
English 11: American Literature	Geometry	Chemistry	US and Global Economics				

English 12: British and World Literature	Personal Finance and Financial Literacy	Physics	Geography and World Cultures				
	Pre-calculus	Earth Science	Sociology				

Any student transferring from another school will be assigned to the next grade level as last attended in grades 9-12. Semester credits will be adjusted to semester credits when transferred to Holton's online virtual program.

**Assessments:** A pupil enrolled in Holton Virtual Academy must complete all of the grade level appropriate state assessment examinations in order to be granted a diploma from Holton Public Schools. A pupil must complete the state assessments, as well as those administered by Holton Public Schools for all required courses, in order to be granted credit for those required courses.

**Academic Programming:** Students must have a full schedule of courses in order to participate in our program. Non-public, or homeschooled students, may take a maximum of 2 courses through Holton. These courses must be "non-essential" as determined by the State of Michigan and Holton Public Schools Board of Education.

**Student Commitment:** It is expected that the student will:

- Be committed to the course(s), adhere to the course schedule as prescribed, and understand that drops will be allowed only as outlined by the district and online provider.
- Work according to the pacing guides in order to complete the requirements of the course.
- Follow all other rules as specified by the district, mentor teacher and online teacher.
- Agree and adhere to the online learn.ng contract.

**Mentor Requirements:** In accordance with Holton Public Schools' and the Michigan Department of Education Pupil Accounting Manual 5-0-B, a teacher certified by the State of Michigan and employed by Holton Public Schools, will serve as a mentor teacher. The mentor teacher shall meet with or have weekly two-way communication with each student enrolled in the program. The mentor teacher assigned may also be the teacher of record.

**Holton Public Schools Transcript & Grading System:** All final scores provided by online instructors will be converted to a letter grade as part of the Holton Public Schools grade scale as listed below. Grades will be entered into PowerSchool and posted on the learner's

transcript; included will also be the cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA). The following decimals are used in determining the GPA of a student:

A 4.0   A- 3.67   B+ 3.33   B 3.0   B- 2.67   C+ 2.33  
C 2.0   C- 1.67   D+ 1.33   D 1.0   D- .67   F 0

If an incomplete grade (I) is issued for: a course, the student then has four weeks following the end of the semester to satisfy the course requirements (or submit work to be graded) to the instructor. Failure to do so by the deadline will result in the replacement of the incomplete (I) with a failing letter grade of an (E).

**Awarding of Credit:** In concurrence with the requirements of the Michigan Merit Curriculum legislation, a student will be awarded credit for a course by completing all relevant learning experiences and earning a passing score on all assignments and assessments including the final exam. The final semester grade issued by the teacher will be placed on the transcript and will be utilized for cumulative GPA tabulation.

**Testing Out - Course Waiver Policy:** This policy has been enacted to allow students who wish to waive a course to do so by showing competency in that course. This competency can be shown through pre-tests that are available at the beginning of each unit.

**Course Materials:** Related Course materials will be issued when appropriate to students for use in their classes. With the exception of expendable items, such as workbooks, practice sets, etc., these items become the responsibility of the student but remain the property of the school district. The books and materials must be returned upon completion of the course or if the student withdraws from school at any time during the year. Students are expected to return the books and materials in as good a condition as when issued. If a book shows signs of careless use or abuse, the student will be fined for the damage at the discretion of the school. Materials that are lost must be replaced at the end of the year at the expense of the student.

**Retaking a Course:** Students will be allowed to retake a course with the grade earned the second time through the course replacing the original grade in the compilation of the cumulative GPA. Students must request, in writing, and require the approval of the principal. The principal's decision will be based on the following considerations: The intent of this policy is to allow students who did not master the material in a course the first time, a second opportunity to learn the material. Students will not be allowed to retake a course if they received a C- or better the 1st time the course was taken.

**Academic Honesty Policy:** Holton Public Schools is committed to helping students grow intellectually, emotionally and socially. In keeping with this mission, academic honesty and integrity are expected of all. Academic dishonesty adversely impacts the individual student and Holton Public School's commitment to maintain a safe, fair and positive program. Each student is responsible for his/her own ethical behavior, and for fostering ethical behavior in others. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- The unauthorized representation of another's work as one's own (plagiarism)
- Borrowing from print or electronically published material, either directly quoted or paraphrased, without including proper citations.
- Knowingly providing one's work to another student who then copies or presents the work as his/her own.
- Using materials of electronic devices not approved during tests, quizzes and other assessments.
- 1st Offense — Loss of grade for assignment; Parent informed.
- 2nd Offense — Loss of grade for assignment; A conference is held with parents and program coordinator; Possible failure of course.
- 3rd Offense — Automatic course failure; Loss of credit of course and removal from VA.

**Attendance Policy:** Students are required to respond to the assigned teacher twice a week for weekly attendance. Attendance will be also monitored daily through login information provided within the online provider's system as well as through tracking progress within the assigned course(s). Hours logged into the system will be tracked and used to further monitor attendance and participation. Students are required to login to their courses and adhere to the timelines established for completion. Students must login during the State of Michigan count periods in the fall and the spring of each year, as instructed by the program coordinator. Weekly mentor contact is mandatory. Students will be expected to attend based upon the schedule provided by the program coordinator.

Failure to comply with the program attendance requirements may result in removal from the program and recommendation to the Muskegon County truancy court.

**Student Parking:** All students and visitors must park their vehicles in the parking lot immediately in front of the building at the end of 4<sup>th</sup> Street. All motor vehicle rules and regulations, as outlined in the Holton High School Handbook, will be enforced.

**Acceptable Use Policy and Online Access:** All students taking online classes are expected to conduct their communications in a professional, respectful manner. The proper use of Internet etiquette is expected at all times. Students are expected to follow the Holton Public Schools Internet User Participation Agreement, even when working through a private Internet provider in the home. School issued Gmail is not private and is for educational use. The following will be addressed by administration upon notification by online instructors, parents, students, or any other person:

- **Cyber-Bullying:** The use of electronic information and communication devices, to include but not be limited to: e-mail messages, instant messaging, text messaging, cellular telephone communications, internet blogs, internet/course chat rooms, internet postings, and defamatory websites that:

1. Deliberately threatens, harasses, intimidates an individual or group of individuals.
  2. Places an individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual, including family members, of damage to the individual's property.
  3. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the course.
- **Inappropriate Usage:** This is included in the use of any Holton Public Schools issued computer, online course, school Gmail account, social media associated with Holton Public Schools and students of Holton Public Schools, as well as on campus usage. Violations include, but are not limited to: posting inappropriate language, pornographic material, inappropriate information, and any other type of unacceptable communication.
  - Violations of the Acceptable Internet & Online Use Policy will be addressed by administration and may also include the notification of the Muskegon County Sheriff's Department. Depending on the severity of the violation, administration will exercise discretion as to the consequence assigned to a student, which may include removal from the program.

# **ONLINE VIRTUAL ACADEMY PROGRAM**

## **Online Learning Contract**

### **Introduction**

Welcome to online virtual learning with Holton Public Schools. Participation in this program has similar requirements to other courses at Holton Public Schools. Students are bound by the standards set forth by the Board of Education within the student handbook, as governed by Board of Education policy. Holton Public Schools, with approval from the Michigan Department of Education, possesses the ability to operate a local district seat time waiver. In doing so, this allows for a unique and individualized academic program. Certain standards and behaviors are expected for all students enrolled in the online virtual program, as it is a privilege to participate in this program.

### **Attendance**

Regular and prompt attendance is essential for student academic success in an online environment. Each student will be expected to comply with the attendance requirements outlined below:

1. The student will adhere to the school's timelines for completion of course requirements.
2. It is recommended that the student invest at least one hour a day per online course.
3. It is expected that the student will log in to course(s) on certain days as required, including the State of Michigan count periods.
4. Virtual students must have a two-way conversation twice each school week with assigned mentor/teacher. Two-way interaction is the communication that occurs between mentor/teacher and pupil, where one party initiates communication and a response from the other party follows that communication. Responses must be to the communication initiated by the teacher of record or mentor, and not some other action taken. This interaction may occur through, but is not limited to, means such as email, telephone, instant messaging, or face-to-face conversation.
5. If a student misses more than two (2) weekly contacts/communication per term, that student may be subject to removal from the program.

### **Student Commitment**

It is expected that each student enrolled in the online virtual program will:

1. Be committed to the course(s), adhere to the course schedules as prescribed, and communicate with course instructor(s) and the mentor teacher on a regular basis.
2. Work according to curriculum documents, pacing guides, and course syllabi in order to complete the requirements of each course that the student is enrolled in.
3. Refrain from inappropriate use of information with any online course.
4. Follow all other rules as specified by Holton Public Schools, the student's mentor, and online instructor provided by the virtual program.



### **Parent/ Guardian Commitment**

It is expected that the parents'/guardians' participation in a student's education will help determine his/her likelihood of success. Therefore, parents/guardians are expected to monitor and support the child in his/her studies, agree to be accessible to the mentor to discuss the student's progress, and promote good attendance and time management of the student's participation. The parent/guardian must maintain reasonable Internet availability for the student and contact Holton Public Schools immediately if there is difficulty with access during the school year. By signing this, you acknowledge that your student will be accessing the internet.

### **Acceptable Use Policy**

It is the responsibility of the student to know the contents of any Acceptable Use Policies, as well as the student handbook for Holton Middle/High School. Anything that students do in the course(s) taken can be retrieved and monitored by the mentor/coordinator/instructor at any time.

### **Tests/Exams**

The online provider may require some of the tests/ exams to be proctored by the mentor or other responsible adult. Arrangements will be made with the mentor as needed. Students enrolled full-time must take the grade appropriate state assessment exam.

### **Cost**

Holton Public Schools will cover the cost of approved online courses taken during the school year if the student is registered in the district (up to 6 courses per semester).

### **Student Acknowledgment and Understanding**

As a student enrolled in the virtual program, I am aware that it is a privilege to participate in this program and, therefore, I am expected to adhere to the highest codes of conduct and integrity. I have read, understand, and acknowledge all the expectations and the policy as set forth in this document. I agree to abide by the guidelines as stated.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Parent/ Guardian Acknowledgment and Understanding**

I have read and understand the policies and stated expectations of my child and agree to support the program expectations. I understand that participation in my student's education will help determine his/her likelihood of success in the program. Therefore I will monitor and support my student in his/her studies. I agree to be accessible and readily available to the mentor to discuss my student's progress and development. I understand time management and attendance is vital to the student's success. I understand acceptance into this program is a privilege and my child must maintain the contracts and program policies in order to remain enrolled. Failure to follow these policies may result in dismissal from the program.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# **ONLINE VIRTUAL ACADEMY PROGRAM**

## **Academic Benchmarks and Requirements for Full Time Students**

Holton Public Schools is committed to high academic standards.

1. Grade Appropriate Assessment — Pupils enrolling in Holton's online virtual program must complete all of the grade level appropriate state assessment examinations in order to be granted a diploma from Holton Public Schools.
  
2. Michigan Merit Examination (SAT/PSAT/M-STEP/WorkKeys) — Pupils enrolled in Holton's online academy seat time waiver program, and are at junior status, must take the SAT/MSTEP/WorkKeys as scheduled by the Department of Education's Office of Assessment and Accountability. Holton Public Schools will provide a student with the testing materials at a location and time to be announced. Students will be notified of the dates and location of the appropriate testing, and will be responsible to be in attendance for the appropriate exams.

State assessments are required for:

- Grade 6: M-STEP (ELA & Math) -2 days
- Grade 7: M-STEP (ELA & Math,) -2 days
- Grade 8: M-STEP (Social Studies & social studies) PSAT (Mathematics & ELA)-3 days
- Grade 9: PSAT 8/9- (Mathematics & ELA)-1 day
- Grade 10: PSAT 10- (Mathematics & ELA)-1 day
- Grade 11: SAT, M-STEP (Science & Social Studies), WorkKeys -3 days

**Student & Parent/ Guardian Acceptance of Academic Benchmarks Requirements as stated**

Parent/ Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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