

Marshalltown Virtual Academy



Marshalltown Virtual Academy Handbook 2021-2022

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Marshalltown Virtual Academy Mission and Vision

The goal of the Marshalltown Virtual Academy (MVA) is to provide students with non-traditional educational opportunities as they pursue a high quality education and achieve their academic goals.

MVA allows students the flexibility to learn on their own schedule and at their own pace through full and part-time learning options. Courses at MVA are taught through Edmentum at grades 7-12 and through Google Classroom at grades PK-6. Students are assigned a qualified District teacher who can offer personalized assistance.

While enrolled in courses at MVA, students are still eligible to join clubs, play sports, and participate in a variety of activities offered at their resident school.

School Contact Information

Administration

Name	Position	Contact
Shauna Smith	Director of Instruction	ssmith@marshalltown.k12.ia.us 641-754-1000
Eric Goslinga	MVA Grades 7-12 Administrator	egoslinga@marshalltown.k12.ia.us 641-752-0039
Ronnie Manis	MVA Grades PK-6 Administrator	rmanis@marshalltown.k12.ia.us 641-754-1020

Technology Support

Technology Support	641-754-1001	techsupport@marshalltown.k12.ia.us
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School Calendar

- MVA will follow the Marshalltown Community School District
- MVA will follow the holiday break schedule on the traditional school calendar.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students must:

- **Communication** – Students are required to communicate with their teachers. Students should respond to their teachers in a timely fashion typically within 24-48 hours.

- **Academic Honesty** – MVA requires the original work of all students and in so doing, prohibits plagiarism of the work of others and cheating. Students shall be expected to properly cite the origin of work that is not the student’s own. If student work, other than commonly known facts, is not properly cited, attributed, or credited, the work may be determined to be plagiarism.
- **Self-Motivation** – Students can direct their own learning environment and procedures to fulfill course requirements enabling them to achieve individual academic success.
- **Independent Learning Style** – Online courses give students the opportunity to set their own pace (within semester timeframes) for learning, eliminating the stress of feeling rushed or pressured during the learning process.
- **Computer Literacy** – Students should know basic computer skills such as utilizing email, navigating the Internet, as well as basic keyboarding skills.
- **Orientation** – Students will be provided with an orientation prior to participating in MVA courses, to ensure competency with the program.
- **Time Management Skills** – Students must be capable of organizing and planning their “time frame for learning.” Students can do their coursework whenever it is best for them, but they must set aside an adequate and realistic amount of time to complete course requirements.
- **Pace** – All courses have a pacing guide for modules as well as individual assignments. These guides assist the student to manage time realistically and effectively.
- **Effective Written Communication Skills** – Students will use email, discussion boards, and essay-type questions to communicate with their instructors and peers. The ability to write clearly and communicate ideas and assignments is essential.
- **Personal Commitment** – Because this learning environment has no bells to begin and end courses, students must have a personal desire to learn and achieve knowledge and skills via online courses. Successful online students are those who decide for themselves that online learning is a choice they have made.

Parent/Guardians must:

- Maintain contact with teachers and school support staff to ensure student success.
- Communicate as needed with the student's primary teacher to receive progress and performance updates.
- Maintain accuracy of home address, phone number(s), and email address(es).
- Ensure student participation in state testing and provide transportation for their student(s) when needed.

MVA Teachers will:

- Virtually manage instructional programs in the assigned content area.
- Communicate weekly with students and parents to ensure that each child successfully completes their instructional program.
- Develop and implement interventions for students as needed.
- Complete all grading and progress reports in a timely manner.
- Support the instructional program and students by providing at least three hours of availability (office hours) each week.

- Supports and implements district curriculum, all standards, and benchmarks.
- Assists MVA parents and students with strategies to support and meet students' needs and achievement of academic goals.
- Assists and collaborates with the MVA administration and staff, parents, and students on matters pertaining to MVA concerns.

Attendance/Enrollment/Registration

Attendance

The MVA is intended to provide an academic environment that promotes independent learning. While students and families in this program will have greater control over when and where learning takes place, success in this program, as with any other, requires structure and a form of attendance. For the purposes of this document, "attendance" will be defined as logging in and turning in one lesson per week per course or subject area. If a student will be absent for an extended period of time, they are expected to communicate with their content teacher as well as notify the school.

It is also important to note that while an online format will provide more flexibility in pace and daily/weekly work time for students, they will still be held to the same yearly calendar as students in traditional school settings. Online students will have the same semester start dates, end dates, and days off as students that attend courses in the buildings.

In order to meet the state's requirements, it is suggested that full-time students adhere to the following recommendations. Each course comes with a personalized pacing guide.

Daily	Weekly	Semester
PK 2 hours K-4 6 hours	10 hours 30 hours	180 hours 540 hours

*The daily hours include self-determined or family-determined breaks within the day. There are live, synchronous learning activities and also recorded, asynchronous learning tasks.

As with students in traditional school settings, parents/guardians of online students are responsible for their student's online attendance per Iowa Code. The school district will monitor student attendance and progress, provide support, and communicate concerns, but it is the family's responsibility to make sure a student is attending regularly and making adequate academic progress as defined by district expectations. Anytime students, parents/guardians, teachers and/or administrators are concerned about a student's attendance, they are encouraged to contact the appropriate party.

Good Academic Standing

A student demonstrating adequate participation, and therefore progress, in school is based on several criteria and is a combination of measures. These measures include assignment

and module completion, student engagement, course percentage completion, and amount of communication with the teacher. Students are expected to submit assignments in each course every week school is in session. A student is in good academic standing based on weekly progress and work submissions as defined by course pace charts and percent complete, as well as regular communication with teachers. Therefore, even though the program may be recording a high number of student logins, failure to make adequate weekly progress and/or regular communication with teachers, in all courses, will place the student at risk for disenrollment from MVA for the following term.

In order to maintain progress, the parent/guardian must ensure that the following activities are taking place:

- Students complete assigned lessons and assessments.
- Students participate in educational activities for an appropriate number of hours.
- Students maintain at least weekly contacts with teachers.
- Student is able to demonstrate that he/she is doing his/her own schoolwork.
- Students attend all mandatory state testing.
- Parent/guardian has communicated with the advisory teacher or administrator in advance if he/ she needs to deviate from the regular school calendar.

Registration/Enrollment

The registration and enrollment process varies slightly between current MCSD elementary students and Open Enrollment students. See the appropriate section below:

Current MCSD PK-4 Students

Elementary school students will be full-time students in MVA which is part of the Marshalltown Community School District.

Students must enroll in the full load of courses per semester for elementary students in order to meet Chapter 12 (Iowa Administrative Code) which includes:

- Asynchronous learning in Google Classroom with videos
 - Literacy (Reading, Writing, Language Arts)
 - Math
 - Science/Social Studies/Health (these 3 rotate throughout the school year)
 - Specials include: Art, Music, Physical Education, Media, or Counseling (these 5 rotate on a 5-6 day schedule)
- Synchronous learning via Google Meets
 - Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Math
 - MTSS Literacy
 - Morning Meeting/Social-Emotional Learning
- Synchronous learning for Support Services (if eligible or entitled) via Google Meets
 - Special Education
 - English Language Learners
 - Title I

- Social Emotional Supports
- Gifted & Talented (XLP)

Students are eligible to participate in up to 2 extracurricular or co-curricular activities or sports in their resident school.

To begin enrollment:

Step 1. Complete an MVA enrollment form online.

For the Fall semester, students must enroll prior to August 23rd. Late enrollments must meet one of the following requirements:

Significant health issues, documented by a health care professional or a school counselor, that make attending a traditional school too difficult for the student to be academically successful. Examples could include, but are not limited to, long-term illnesses and/or hospitalizations and mental health issues such as anxiety or depression OR documented school safety issues such as harassment and bullying.

Step 2. The MVA staff member reviews the handbook with the family.

Step 3. Upon acceptance into the program, the student will receive an email with instructions on accessing their courses.

Open Enrollment Elementary (K-4) Students

Elementary school students who open enroll from other school districts will be full-time students in MVA, which is part of the Marshalltown Community School District.

Students must enroll in the full load of courses per semester for elementary students in order to meet Chapter 12(Iowa Administrative Code) which include:

- Asynchronous learning in Google Classroom with videos
 - Literacy (Reading, Writing, Language Arts)
 - Math
 - Science/Social Studies/Health (these 3 rotate throughout the school year)
 - Specials include: Art, Music, Physical Education, Media, or Counseling (these 5 rotate on a 5-6 day schedule)
- Synchronous learning via Google Meets
 - Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Math
 - MTSS Literacy
 - Morning Meeting/Social-Emotional Learning
- Synchronous learning for Support Services (if eligible) via Google Meets
 - Special Education
 - English Language Learners
 - Title I
 - Social Emotional Supports
 - Gifted & Talented (XLP)

Students are eligible to participate in up to 2 extracurricular or co-curricular activities or sports in their resident school.

To begin the open enrollment process:

Step 1: Fill out the [Iowa Open Enrollment Application](#) before March 2nd.

Step 2: Complete the [MCS D Enrollment form](#).

Step 3: In August, we'll contact you to let you know it's time to register with Marshalltown Virtual Academy (MVA) through MCS D. Look for an email with the subject line "Marshalltown Virtual Academy Scheduling".

Student Progress

If the student does not make progress within five school days, the student will be required to develop a plan for progress with their instructor. If a student does not make progress, they will be assigned weekly contact days (virtual or face-to-face) with the MVA teacher and/or administrator until the student is back on track.

Withdrawal/Drop

Enrolling in MVA is a semester-long commitment. If a student does not make progress within one semester, MVA staff, parents, and the student will meet to determine best placement for the following semester.

Grading and Reporting

MCS D commits to all stakeholders to provide fair, accurate, specific, and timely information regarding student progress towards agreed-upon common standards as well as feedback for next steps and growth areas. MVA certified teachers in grades PK-4 will assess student work and complete all grading and reporting.

Infinite Campus

All final grades will be found and recorded on Infinite Campus. Progress in individual subject areas can be shared at any time. Contact your child/children's teacher for specific information.

Special Education, Individual Education Plans (IEP), and 504

A student whose individual educational plan (IEP) team or 504 team has determined that virtual instruction is appropriate may be enrolled in MVA.

An IEP team meeting is necessary. The IEP team will be composed of individuals in accordance with the requirements of the state.

Activities/Athletics

Activities/Athletic Policy will relate closely to that of Home Instruction. If students in the MVA are interested in pursuing Activities/Athletics, they will do this at their resident elementary school. Open Enrollment students are limited to 2 activities.

In order to participate in activities, students will have to do the following:

- Follow eligibility codes and regulations set by the state and district.
- Contact their resident school administrator to set up participation in such activities.

Civility Code

In order to maintain an orderly, respectful, and secure virtual educational environment, it is essential that all students, parents/guardians, teachers/staff, and other stakeholders maintain respectful interactions and adhere to the expected civil conduct. MVA is dedicated to providing personalized learning solutions for all students, and the presence of a positive partnership between all students, parents/guardians, faculty and staff is vital in this process. In an effort to ensure that we are all focused on student learning and helping students to reach their full potential, we ask that all parties conduct themselves in a respectful and orderly manner at all times.

No person shall:

- Use profanity or make threats toward school staff or other students in any verbal or written communication.
- Intentionally cause any physical/emotional harm toward another person or threaten to do so.
- Intentionally damage or destroy any school property (such as a computer/charger/bag) or the property of any student, faculty, or staff member.
- Disrupt the orderly conduct of courses, school programs, or other activities.
- Intimidate, harass, or discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.
- Refuse to comply with any reasonable request of identifiable school officials performing their duties.
- Willfully incite others to commit any acts prohibited by law.
- Violate any federal or state statute.

Any violation of the Civility Code shall be reported to Professional Standards for review and action.

Acceptable Use Policy

The District requires employees and students to learn to use computing devices, data networks, enterprise software systems, electronic mail, the Internet, and telecommunications tools and apply them in the appropriate ways to the performance of tasks associated with their positions and assignments.

Students and employees shall only engage in appropriate, ethical, and legal utilization of the District's technology, network systems, and internet access. Student instruction on digital citizenship standards which includes safe, ethical, and responsible use of the Internet will be defined and taught within core curriculum. Student and employee use of the District's technology, network systems, and internet access shall also comply with all District policies and regulations.

The following rules provide guidance to students and employees for the appropriate use of the District's technology, network systems, and internet access. Inappropriate use and/or access will result in the restriction and/or termination of the privilege of access to and use of the District's technology, network systems, and internet access and may result in further discipline for students up to and including expulsion and/or other legal action and may result in further discipline for employees up to and including termination of employment and/or other legal action. The District's administration will determine what constitutes inappropriate use and their decision will be final.

Inappropriate use includes, but is not limited to:

- Uses which violate any local, state or federal statute or regulation.
- Creating, accessing, uploading, downloading, transmitting or distributing pornographic, obscene, profane, abusive, threatening, sexually explicit or otherwise inappropriate material, or material encouraging or promoting discrimination towards individuals or groups of individuals based upon a legally protected trait or characteristic.
- Uses which violate copyright laws or otherwise misuse of the intellectual property of another individual or organization.
- Accessing another individual's materials, information, or files without authorization (authority).
- Any unauthorized access or malicious attempts to damage hardware/software or networks, circumvent or disable security protocols, or to destroy the data of another user, including creating, loading or intentionally introducing viruses.
- Altering the operation of computing devices as set by the network administrator.
- Using computing devices, data network or Internet for commercial purposes, or personal purposes which interfere with job performance or function of the workplace, or other purposes not consistent with the educational objectives of the District.
- Using the system to communicate, publish or display defamatory materials, rumors, disparaging portrayals or any other information which is known to be false or misleading.
- Harassing, insulting, or threatening harm or embarrassment of others.
- Swearing or using vulgarities or any other inappropriate language.

- Disseminating or soliciting sexually oriented messages or images.
- Disabling, circumventing or attempting to disable or circumvent filtering software.
- Transmitting personal credit card information or other personal identification information.
- Invading the privacy of individuals without authorization.
- Failing to follow District policy while using computing devices, data networks or accessing the Internet; or failing to follow any other policies or guidelines established by District administration or the employee's supervisor and failure to follow instructions of supervisors.

Individuals should not allow anyone else to use their assigned login credentials or passwords to access or use the District's computing devices, data network, information systems or the Internet. Users are responsible for the security of their own email, computer and data network access. Users will be held responsible for any misuse of their computing device, e-mail or data network access by themselves or by others when the user has failed to follow appropriate security measures.

Employees authorized to allow student access to the District's data network and Internet may do so only according to this policy and are responsible for supervising student access. Employees who allow student access to computer networks and the Internet in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Employees are responsible for maintaining a safe and secure school environment. This includes computing devices and the data network. All users will routinely change passwords when required or directed by system administrators. Staff will assist students with password changes as needed. Users determined to be a security risk may have access restrictions applied.

Access to District Technology, Network Systems, and Internet

Access

The District's technology, network systems, and internet access shall be available to all students and staff within the District. However, access is a privilege, not a right. The amount of time and type of access available for each student and staff member may be limited by the District's technology and the demands for the use of the District's technology. Even if students have not been given access to and/or use of the District's technology, network systems, and the internet, they may still be exposed to information from the District's technology, network systems, and/or the internet in guided curricular activities at the discretion of their teachers.

Parents/guardians may request in writing that their child's connection to the Internet be restricted. Some educational content, resources, and assessments are only available via the District's data network and Internet connection. Students who are restricted will still use those educational resources deemed essential by the District.

Protecting and Monitoring District Technology

The District will have procedures that govern access, use, and security of the District networked resources in order to exercise appropriate control over computer records, including financial, personnel and student information. The procedures will address: role-based access, remote access, passwords, system administration, data back-up (including archiving of email), and disaster recovery.

The District's system administrators may close a user account at any time, and administrators may request the system administrators to deny, revoke or suspend user accounts. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with appropriate use may be denied access to the District's technology, the District's network systems, and/or the District's internet access.

The District has the right, but not the duty, to monitor any and all aspects of its technology, network systems, and internet access including, but not limited to, monitoring sites students and staff visit on the internet and reviewing email and electronic files. The administration shall have both the authority and right to examine all technology and internet activity including any logs, data, e-mail, storage and/or other technology related records of any user. The use of e-mail and other communication tools are limited to District and educational purposes only. Students and employees waive any right to privacy in anything they create, store, send, disseminate, or receive on the District's technology and network systems, including the internet.

Internet Content Filtering

The internet is an ever-expanding resource that adds large quantities of content on a daily basis. However, some of the content is inappropriate for student use and may even be harmful to students' health, safety and welfare. Therefore, the Marshalltown Community School District has determined that it will limit student access to certain undesirable topics, including but not limited to, information and images that are obscene, constitute child pornography or are otherwise harmful to minors. Since it is not feasible for the District to continually monitor the content of the internet, the Marshalltown Community School District will employ technology protection measures in the form of internet filtering software or services in an attempt to block access to these types of harmful and inappropriate materials.

The District's implementation of internet filtering does not guarantee that students will be prevented from accessing materials that may be considered inappropriate and/or harmful. However, it is a meaningful effort on the part of the District to prevent students from accessing inappropriate and/or harmful materials on the internet. The District makes no guarantee that the filtering software will be available at all times or that the filtering software will block all inappropriate and/or harmful material.

Although reasonable efforts will be made to make sure students will be under supervision while on the network, it is not possible to constantly monitor individual students and what they are accessing on the network. Some students may encounter information that may not be of educational value and/or may be inappropriate. If a student encounters such information, the student should terminate access to the information immediately and notify supervisory personnel or other appropriate personnel of what occurred.

If there is an accessible Uniform Resource Locator [URL] that may be inappropriate and not blocked, or if an educationally valuable URL is blocked, staff may submit a request to have the site reviewed and the filtering of that site changed (blocked or unblocked). All requests are submitted via a Web Filtering Request. All requests to change filtering status of a URL will be logged.

Bullying/Harassing & Other Prohibited Behaviors

Marshalltown Community School District prohibits harassment, bullying, hazing, or any other victimization of students, based on any of the following: actual or perceived traits or characteristics, including but not limited to, age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status.

The District considers harassment and bullying to be any electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or conduct toward a student which is based on any real or actual perceived trait or characteristic of the student and which creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:

- Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or property;
- Has a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health;
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance;
- or
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

"Electronic" includes but is not limited to communication via electronic mail, internet-based communications, pager service, cell phones, electronic text messaging, or similar technologies.

A hostile school environment is defined as a situation in which the bullying/ harassment conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school.

Harassment and bullying may include, but are not limited to, the following behaviors and circumstances:

- Verbal, nonverbal, physical or written harassment, bullying, hazing, or other victimization that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim;
- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim;
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, property, etc. that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim;
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim; and/or
- Unreasonable interference with a student's performance or creating of an intimidating, offensive, or hostile learning environment.

Sexual harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to the conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of the student's education or benefits;
- Submission to or rejection of the conduct by a school employee is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that student; or
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive education environment.

A student (or adult on the student's behalf) who believes he/she has suffered harassment should report such matters to certified staff/counselors/ administrators and/or the Equity Director.

Retaliation against a student because the student has filed a harassment complaint or assisted or participated in a harassment investigation or proceeding is also prohibited. The MCSD's policy on bullying and harassment can be found on the district website.

Academic Integrity

- Unless a teacher has made it clear that an assignment, project, or test is to be done as a group or in pairs, it is dishonest to allow another student to copy your work or to give someone the answers. This is commonly known as cheating.
- If a teacher forbids the use of any source whether written or electronic, it is dishonest to use that source. This would include translation programs and calculators. This is cheating.
- For written assignments, it is dishonest to submit a paper that has already been turned in for another class unless the teacher has given his or her permission. This is cheating.
- When writing a paper, it is dishonest to use any written, spoken, or electronic source without giving credit to the authors. This would include paying for or downloading

papers from the Internet. This is commonly known as plagiarism. Out of school student to student consultation or assistance from parents and/or tutors may be exempted from these considerations. Some accommodations or exceptions may be made for those students having an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).

Consequences

There will be appropriate consequences applied for infractions of these rules. The sanctions may include any or all of the following: a lowered grade for the individual assignment or for the course itself, parental notification, and/or an office referral. Individual staff members or departments may choose additional consequences that correspond with the magnitude of the specific offense. This can potentially affect eligibility for academic organizations.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of the Marshalltown Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact Dr. Nora Ryan, Equity/Affirmative Action Coordinator, Marshalltown Community School District, 1002 South 3rd Avenue, Marshalltown, IA 50158, Phone 641-754-1000. Email – nryan@marshalltown.k12.ia.us.