

Policy IGCD: VIRTUAL COURSES

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 08/29/2019

2023A UPDATE EXPLANATION

MSBA has revised this policy to align with a change in the law pursuant to House Bill 1552 (2022). This bill made some significant changes to the Missouri Course Access and Virtual School Program (MOCAP) program. The law created a separate process for students who enroll full-time with MOCAP course providers "hosted" by a Missouri public school, charter school or higher education institution. This process is covered in detail in policy IGCD. But the law also modified the MOCAP program for students who enroll in MOCAP part-time or full-time with providers that are not hosted by a district, charter school or higher education institution.

1. **Eligibility.** The law removes the requirement that a student must have attended a public school in the previous semester before enrolling in virtual courses through MOCAP. This means that a student may enroll in your district and request to immediately attend MOCAP courses without ever having been educated in a public school or in your school district.
2. **Appeals.** The new law changes the appeal process. While districts can prohibit students from enrolling in MOCAP courses only if it is not in the best educational interest of the student, there is no longer an appeal to the school board or the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The district will handle the appeal as they would an appeal of any other course denial.
3. **Notice to Parents/Guardians and Students.** In addition to advertising the MOCAP program on the homepage of the district's webpage, the district will be required to distribute a copy of DESE's guidance on how to enroll in MOCAP courses to all students and parents/guardians. The district is also required to provide a link to the guidance on the main page of its website.

The following vendors currently provide courses through MOCAP:

MOCAP Providers with Hosts

At Home Virtual Program (Mehlville School District)
Launch (Springfield Public Schools)
Missouri Connections Academy-MOCA (Sturgeon R-V School District)
Missouri Digital Academy-MODA (Laquey R-5 School District)
Missouri Virtual Academy-MOVA (Grandview R-II School District)
Mizzou Academy (Lee's Summit R-7 School District)
SJSD Virtual Academy (St. Joseph School District)

MOCAP Providers without Hosts

Accelerate Education
Acellus Academy
Edmentum
eDynamic
EYC Academy
Greenways Academy
Imagine-Edgenuity
Imagine-Odysseyware
SchoolsPLP

EDITOR'S NOTE: My records indicate that your district neither adopted nor declined the revisions made to this policy in update 2021B. Because the nature of the Simbli platform makes the creation of combination ref copies prohibitively difficult in most cases, those changes are included in this reference copy without markup. Please read the content of this policy carefully.

This policy governs part-time enrollment with a hosted Missouri Course Access and Virtual School Program (MOCAP) provider, full- and part-time enrollment with other MOCAP providers, and enrollment in other virtual course options provided through the district. Students who seek full-time enrollment with a hosted MOCAP provider must enroll pursuant to policy IGCD.

Definitions

Full-Time Virtual Course Enrollment – The instructional equivalent of six credits per regular term.

Hosted MOCAP Provider – A public school district, charter school or higher education institution that is registered through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to provide virtual education through the MOCAP program to Missouri students. A host district may provide the courses directly or contract with a course provider to provide the courses.

MOCAP Provider – An entity listed by DESE as part of the virtual course program under § 161.670, RSMo., that provides virtual courses for elementary and/or secondary students.

Virtual Course – A single class that is offered by or provided through the district that results in a district-issued grade and/or academic credit and that is designed to deliver all or most of the curriculum electronically. Students may be separated from their instructor or teacher of record by time, location or both.

General

Virtual instruction can be an effective education option for some students, and the district may offer virtual courses to students through district staff or by contracting for those services as part of the district-sponsored curriculum. Eligible students may also enroll in Missouri Course Access and Virtual School Program (MOCAP) courses in accordance with policy IGCDA. The district will accept all grades and credits earned through district-sponsored virtual instruction and MOCAP. Students may also enroll in virtual courses offered through MOCAP providers. This could result in entire course loads that are provided through virtual courses from the district, district-selected and/or MOCAP providers while the student remains enrolled in the district.

Students may also take virtual courses from other sources at their own expense. Before a student independently enrolls in and pays for virtual courses not otherwise accessible through the district, the district recommends that the student meet with district staff to ensure that the course aligns with the student's education goals and that the district will accept the course credit.

Virtual Course Behavior and Expectations

Students taking courses virtually are subject to district policies, procedures and rules applicable to students enrolled in traditional courses including, but not limited to, the district's code of conduct and prohibitions on academic dishonesty, discrimination, harassment, bullying and cyberbullying. When students are participating in virtual courses, what can be seen and heard electronically from the student's location becomes part of the district's education environment. Students are responsible for ensuring that what is seen, heard or otherwise communicated is appropriate for the learning environment and is not disruptive. The district's code of conduct applies to virtual in-class behavior. Student speech that is prohibited on campus is also prohibited in the virtual classroom. In a virtual classroom, such conduct or speech could include, but is not limited to, messaging conveyed by symbols or phrases that are visible on clothing; signage in the visible background; virtual background imagery; graphics or text visible during screen sharing; background audio; communications in classroom chats; disruptive screen names; and any other messaging a student places into the virtual environment that disrupts learning, is not appropriate for the education environment or is contrary to the district's educational mission. Students may electronically display everyday items that they would be prohibited from possessing at school (such as pets, toys or objects forming typical room décor) as long as the display does not disrupt learning.

Virtual Course Enrollment

The superintendent or designee will establish open enrollment periods and registration deadlines for students to enroll in district-offered virtual courses and MOCAP courses. These enrollment periods and registration deadlines will be strictly enforced unless the superintendent or designee determines that an exception is warranted due to circumstances such as a change in a student's health or the long-term suspension of a student. Enrollment periods and registration deadlines must align with the district's academic calendar and assessment schedule to the extent practicable. If the request to take a virtual course is denied, students or their parents/guardians may appeal the decision to the superintendent or designee, and the superintendent's or designee's decision will be final. Requests to take MOCAP courses will be processed as required by law as outlined in policy IGCDA.

A student or parent/guardian must receive district approval before the student may enroll in virtual courses provided by or paid for by the district or through MOCAP.

Enrollment in courses offered through MOCAP may be denied only if the principal or designee, in consultation with

the student's parents/guardians and relevant staff, determines that it is not in the student's best educational interest to enroll in the course. The principal or designee will consider available opportunities for in-person instruction and the student's prior participation in virtual courses when making this decision. As required by law, the district allows for continuous enrollment in MOCAP courses throughout the year. The principal or designee will approve or deny requests to enroll in a MOCAP course within the timeframe required by law.

Enrollment Decision Review

The principal or designee will notify the student and the parents/guardians in writing when declining student enrollment in a virtual course and provide an explanation for the decision. The student or parent/guardian may request that the superintendent review the decision, but the superintendent's decision is final.

Students with Disabilities

A student's individualized education program (IEP) team or Section 504 team will make the virtual course enrollment decisions for students with IEPs or Section 504 plans. If enrollment is appropriate, the IEP or Section 504 team will determine the services, aids, supports and accommodations required. Any review of a decision made by an IEP or Section 504 team must go through the process provided under federal law.

Attendance and Completion

Students who enroll in district-sponsored virtual courses or MOCAP courses through the district 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 progressing in the course, the district may remove the student from the virtual course and refuse to enroll the student in virtual courses in the future. The district will consider the student's performance when making decisions regarding future virtual course enrollments.

Students enrolled in virtual courses are expected to complete all course requirements in the time allotted for the course. Extensions of time to complete a virtual course will be permitted only in situations where completion of the course in the allotted time would be impossible due to factors beyond the student's control.

Students enrolled in a district-sponsored course or MOCAP course through the district will be considered in attendance for state aid purposes in accordance with law. A completed virtual course or MOCAP course shall be counted as no less than 95 percent attendance for purposes of A+ Scholarship Program eligibility.

Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities

Students enrolled in virtual courses offered through the district or through MOCAP under this policy are considered district students and are eligible to participate in extracurricular activities unless restricted by the Missouri State High School Activities Association.

End-of-Course (EOC) Examinations State Assessments

Students are required to take the state-mandated assessments, including district-administered EOC examinations, administered by the district regardless of whether the course for which the examination is required was taken virtually or in person.

Credit

The district will accept all grades and credits earned through district-sponsored virtual instruction and MOCAP providers. Credits obtained from other sources will be recognized in accordance with policy JECC.

Notice

District-provided and district-sponsored virtual courses will be advertised in the district's course catalog.

The district will inform students and parents/guardians of MOCAP program availability in parent/guardian handbooks and registration documents and feature the program on the homepage of the district's website, as required by law. The district will provide every student enrolled in the district and parents/guardians with a copy of DESE's MOCAP guidance document at the beginning of the school year or upon enrollment. In addition, the district will provide a

readily viewable link to the guidance document on the main page of its website.

Payment

The district will pay the tuition for MOCAP courses when required by law to do so but is not otherwise required to pay the tuition for a student to attend a virtual course unless the course is approved by the district as part of the district's course offerings.

Virtual Course Behavior and Expectations

Students taking courses virtually are subject to district policies, procedures and rules applicable to students enrolled in traditional courses including, but not limited to, the district's code of conduct and prohibitions on academic dishonesty, discrimination, harassment, bullying and cyberbullying.

When students are participating in virtual courses, what can be seen and heard electronically from the student's location becomes part of the district's education environment. Students are responsible for ensuring that what is seen, heard or otherwise communicated is appropriate for the learning environment and not disruptive. The district's code of conduct applies to virtual in-class behavior. Student speech that is prohibited on campus is also prohibited in the virtual classroom.

Students may electronically display everyday items that they would be prohibited from possessing at school (such as pets, toys or objects forming typical room décor) as long as the display does not disrupt learning.

Policy Reference Disclaimer: These references are not intended to be part of the policy itself, nor do they indicate the basis or authority for the board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.

State References

§161.670, RSMo.

Description

State Statute -
<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/slashVClYWU73Tdpv4JZYxrPDw==>

§610.021, RSMo.

State Statute -
<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/slashVClYWU73Tdpv4JZYxrPDw==>

Federal References

20 U.S.C. § 1400-1417

Description

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act -
<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/plusSLEkiEKYG9tr1Va3O8c8g==>

29 U.S.C. § 794

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 -
<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/plusSLEkiEKYG9tr1Va3O8c8g==>

34 C.F.R Part 104

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 -
<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/aJX5mfZD1pluss1btjfsishfEmXA==>

34 C.F.R Part 300

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act -
<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/aJX5mfZD1pluss1btjfsishfEmXA==>

42 U.S.C. §§ 12101-12213

Americans with Disabilities Act -
<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/plusSLEkiEKYG9tr1Va3O8c8g==>

Cross References

Description

AC

PROHIBITION AGAINST ILLEGAL DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION -
<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/PGBz6kueFRQYz3BCDNN3tQ==>

BDC

CLOSED MEETINGS, RECORDS AND VOTES -
<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/zuldA5Vm0Gu0CV9GisshKfXA==>

BDDH-1

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS -
<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/pGBXzfFyntau9rHotnTazA==>

JEA	COMPULSORY AND PART-TIME ATTENDANCE - https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/j9k22dHOxrJZXpntq8M0BA==
JEA-AP(1)	COMPULSORY AND PART-TIME ATTENDANCE - (Part-Time Attendance) - https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/yVWK95iJ4dTbz1kQXiTYDg==
JECC-1	ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS TO GRADE LEVELS/CLASSES - https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/n9TkefEPBPajdm8ghgBeNg==
JFCF	BULLYING - https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/FWjoohFQpKxn29Q2kgNfNw==
JHD	STUDENT COUNSELING PROGRAM - https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/SU/PLd0UzgUJumw1G8bHoLN1g==

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