

GULL LAKE

Community Schools

Gull Lake Virtual School Student Handbook

2016-2017

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STUDENT HANDBOOK

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GULL LAKE VIRTUAL SCHOOL



On behalf of the staff and administration, we would like to extend a warm welcome to returning students and their families and to those who are new to the Gull Lake Virtual School. We hope that you share in the excitement that each new school year brings.

The Gull Lake Virtual School has a reputation for providing a quality education to its students. We are committed to delivering an outstanding education in an environment where students are focused on academic achievement, and have the necessary support to be successful.

The success of the Gull Lake Virtual School is based upon the solid partnership that exists among students, parents, staff and community. When the community and school work together toward high expectations for student achievement and conduct, students demonstrate great success as positive, confident learners. Our goal at Gull Lake is to challenge all students to strive for educational excellence as we seek to “Graduate Leaders.”

This student handbook provides valuable information designed in making your experiences in the program rewarding and has been prepared to provide you with the policies and procedures of the Gull Lake Virtual School. Every policy and procedure has been developed to assist in a safe and orderly educational environment for all students. It is important that all students review the information contained in this handbook and use it as a reference during the school year.

We take pride in the excellence that our school represents. The staff and administration of the Gull Lake Virtual School are ready to assist in helping you meet the challenges of the year ahead.

Sincerely,

Bobbi Jo Stoner
Coordinator of Early College, Virtual and Home School Partnership

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Gull Lake Community Schools is to educate every child to achieve his/her full potential.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN GULL LAKE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The Board of Education believes that durable and significant learning by a student is more likely to occur when there is an effective partnership between the school and the student's parents/guardians ("parents"). Such a partnership means a mutual belief in and commitment to significant educational goals for a student, a plan for the means to accomplish those goals, cooperation on developing and implementing solutions to problems that may be encountered and continuing communication regarding the progress in accomplishing the goal(s). For more information, please go to the District website www.gulllakecs.org and see policy 2112 under the policy link.

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

It is the policy of this District to provide an equal education opportunity for all students. Any person who believes that the School or any staff person has discriminated against a student on the basis of race, color, creed, disability, religion, gender, age, ancestry, national origin, or other protected characteristics as well as place of residence within District boundaries, or social or economic background, has the right to file a complaint. A formal complaint may be made in writing to the School District's Compliance Officer: Superintendent's Office (269) 548-3400. The complaint will be investigated and a response, in writing, will be given to the concerned person within five days. Under no circumstances will the District threaten or retaliate against anyone who raises or files a complaint.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The rules and procedures of the school are designed to allow each student to obtain an appropriate education. Staff will respect students' expression and association rights, as appropriate and permitted in the school setting. Students are likewise expected to respect staff members' rights. Disciplinary procedures are designed to ensure due process (a fair hearing) before a student is removed because of his/her behavior.

Parents should know how their student is succeeding in school and will be provided with information on a regular basis and as needed when concerns arise. Many times it will be the student's responsibility to deliver that information. If necessary, the mail or hand delivery may be used to ensure contact. Parents are encouraged to build a two-way link with their student's teachers and mentors by informing the staff of suggestions or concerns that may help their student better accomplish his/her educational goals. **A concern should first be addressed with the person most closely related to a situation (usually the teacher or mentor) before proceeding to an administrator.**

STUDENT RECORDS

Many student records are kept by the teachers, counselors and administrative staff. There are two basic kinds of records – directory information and confidential records. Directory information can be given to any person or organization for non-profit making purposes when requested, unless the parents of the student restrict the information, in writing to the Principal. Directory information includes:

- A. Student's name
- B. Address
- C. Telephone number
- D. Dates of attendance
- E. Date of graduation
- F. Awards received
- G. Telephone numbers for inclusion in school or PTO directories

Parents and adult students may refuse to allow the District to disclose any or all of such “directory information” upon written notification to the District within thirty (30) school days after receipt of the District’s public notice. The District may disclose “directory information” on former students without student or parental consent.

Confidential records contain educational and behavioral information that has restricted access based on the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Michigan law. This information can only be released with the written consent of the parents, the adult student, or a surrogate. The only exception to this is to comply with the State and Federal laws that may require release without consent.

Included in the confidential records may be test scores, psychological reports, behavioral data, disciplinary actions and communications with the family and outside service providers.

Confidential information that is in a student’s record that originates from an outside professional or agency may be released to the parent only with the permission of the originator. Such records shall be placed in a student’s file only with the knowledge of the parent. Parents may obtain such records from the originator and should maintain them in a home file. Parents may also provide the School with copies of records made by non-school professional agencies or individuals. Information on former students also falls into directory and confidential information categories and will be made available on the same basis as enrolled students.

Students and parents have the right to review all educational records generated by the school district, request amendment to these records, insert addendum to records, and obtain copies of such records. Copying costs may be charged. If a review of records is desired, please contact the building office, in writing, stating the records desired. The records will be collected and an appointment will be made with the appropriate persons present to answer any questions.

STUDENT FEES, FINES, AND CHARGES

Gull Lake Community Schools charges specific fees for the non-curricular activities and programs. Such fees or charges are determined by the cost of materials, freight/handling fees, and add-on fees for loss or damage to school property. The school and staff do not make a profit. Fees may be waived in situations where there is financial hardship.

Students using school property and equipment can be fined for excessive wear and abuse of the property and equipment. The fine is used to pay for the damage, not to make a profit. Failure to pay fines, fees or charges may result in withholding of grades and credits.

Damage to or loss of school equipment and facilities wastes taxpayer's money and undermines the school program. Therefore, if a student damages or loses school property, the student or his/her parents will be required to pay for the replacement or damage.

COMPUTER RESOURCES/ACCESS

The purpose of this policy is to clarify computer access for educational purposes for students. It is intended to protect the significant investment and to help create a positive learning environment. The use of District resources is to support the academic program and will include computer use, networked computer use and/or access to the Internet and World Wide Web. As such, this access will:

- Assist in the collaboration and exchange of information.
- Facilitate personal growth in the use of technology.
- Enhance information gathering and communication skills.

In exchange for computer access, students understand and agree to the following:

- A. The use of the computer resources is a privilege, which may be revoked by the District at any time and for any reason. Appropriate reasons for revoking privileges include, but are not limited to, the altering of system software, the placing of unauthorized information, computer viruses or harmful programs on or through the computer system in either public or private files or messages. The District reserves the right to remove files, limit or deny access, and refer the student for other disciplinary actions.
- B. The District reserves all rights to any material stored in files which are generally accessible to others and will remove any materials which the District, at its sole discretion, believes may be unlawful, obscene, pornographic, abusive, or otherwise objectionable. Students will not use their computer access to obtain, view, download, or otherwise gain access to such materials.
- C. All information services and features contained on District resources are intended for the private use of its registered users and any use of these resources for commercial-for-profit

or other unauthorized purposes (i.e. advertisements, political lobbying), in any form, is expressly forbidden.

- D. District resources are intended for the exclusive use of their registered user. The student is responsible for the use of his/her access privilege. Use of an account by someone other than the registered account holder is forbidden and may be grounds for loss of access privileges.
- E. Any misuse of access privileges will result in suspension of those privileges and/or other disciplinary action determined by the District. Misuse shall include, but not be limited to:
- Intentionally seeking information on, obtaining copies of, or modifying files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users.
 - Misrepresenting other users.
 - Disrupting the operation of any resource through abuse of the hardware or software.
 - Malicious use through hates mail, harassment, profanity, vulgar statements, or discriminatory remarks.
 - Interfering with others use of the resource.
 - Illegal installation of copyrighted software.
 - Unauthorized downloading, copying or use of licensed copyrighted software.
- F. The District cannot guarantee that the functions of the system will meet any specific requirements the user may have, or that it will be error free or uninterrupted, nor shall it be liable for any direct or indirect, incidental, or consequential damages (including lost data, information, or time) sustained or incurred in connection with the use, operation, or inability to use the system. While the computers around the district are protected by virus-protection software, the School or its employees will not accept responsibility for damage to a student's home equipment that might be the result of a virus contracted from school. It is recommended that home computers be protected with up-to-date virus protection.
- G. The student may transfer files from the information services and electronic bulletin board services. For each file received through a file transfer, the Student agrees to check the file with a virus-detection program before opening the file for use. Should the student intentionally transfer a file, shareware, or software, which infects the District's resources with a virus and causes damage, the student is liable for any and all repair costs and may be subject to other disciplinary measures by the District.
- H. The District reserves the right to log computer use and to monitor fileserver space utilization by users. The District reserves the right to remove a user account and to review student emails and activity on their school accounts at any time.

In consideration for the privileges of using the District resources, and in consideration for having access to the information contained through them, students release the District and its employees from any and all claims arising from use or inability to use the resources.

DISTRICT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance at school is vitally important to each student as it directly affects his/her progress academically and his/her development of attitudes and habits for later life. Studies of student progress in school show a high correlation between attendance and success or absence and failure. Employers and institutions of higher education request attendance records as a part of student application data and weigh such records heavily in their decisions.

While keeping records of student attendance is a school function, the primary responsibility for ensuring regular attendance at school rests with the **parent and the student**. At the same time, the school continually tries to teach students the value and importance of regular attendance. Through the cooperative efforts of parents and the school, it is hoped that each student will develop attendance habits and attitudes, which will be helpful to his/her future endeavors.

Board Policy 5200 – Attendance

The Board of Education requires all students enrolled in Gull Lake Community Schools to attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the State. The district's educational program is predicated upon the attendance of the student and requires continuity of instruction and class participation.

STUDENT CONCERNS, SUGGESTIONS, AND GRIEVANCES

The School is here for the benefit of the students. The staff is here to assist a student in becoming a responsible adult. If a student has suggestions that could improve the school, he/she should feel free to offer them. Written suggestions may be presented directly to the mentor or the school administrator.

When concern or grievances arise, the best way to resolve the issue is through communication. No student will be harassed by any staff member or need fear reprisal for the proper expression of a legitimate concern. A student with suggestions, concern and grievances may be directed to the Principal. In addition, a student has the right to a hearing if the student believes he/she has been improperly denied participation in a school activity or has been subjected to an illegal rule or standard. A student may not petition to have a change in grade.

**Gull Lake Virtual School
Program Specific
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

GULL LAKE VIRTUAL SCHOOL

The Gull Lake Virtual School provides students with a personalized learning plan and a challenging curriculum in an online setting to those residing in Kalamazoo County and districts contiguous to Kalamazoo County as well as to any student already enrolled in Gull Lake Community Schools. This curriculum features courses in Mathematics, Science, Language Arts, World Languages, Social Studies, and other electives. There are also opportunities for Advanced Placement and Remedial courses.

The on-line academic programs that are available to students are K12, Fuel Education, Michigan Virtual School, Odysseyware, and Lincoln Learning Solutions. Students have the opportunity to select the virtual program that best meets the needs of their individual learning style. In addition, the Gull Lake Virtual School assigns each student a Mentor/Learning Coach who facilitates learning outcomes, technical issues, and communication between students and instructors.

GULL LAKE VIRTUAL SCHOOL STUDENT PROFILE

Gull Lake Virtual School students are enrolled in classes for Kindergarten through 12th grade. Parents have chosen the Gull Lake Virtual School for a variety of reasons but primarily because it offers the best academic environment and program to meet their children’s needs. Gull Lake Virtual School’s student backgrounds are diverse. Our students may be any of the following:

- Students who are homeschooled
- Students who participate in the Partnership
- Students who are enrolled in a traditional educational program and take some courses through the Virtual School
- Students who are full-time virtual school learners

GULL LAKE VIRTUAL SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

Interested students and parents/guardians should contact the Gull Lake Community School Administration Office at 269-548-3418. Students that are new to Gull Lake High School are required to enroll with their parents or legal guardian. When enrolling, the parents will meet with the Principal of the Virtual School and will need to bring:

- Gull Lake Virtual Student Enrollment Form (available on Gull Lake’s website)
- Gull Lake Virtual Agreement Form or Schools of Choice 105 (c) Form(available on Gull Lake’s website)
- Proof of residency
- Gull Lake Release for School Records (if applicable – available on Gull Lake’s website)
- A copy of the student’s birth certificate


- The student's immunization record and/or Waiver
- Custody papers from a court (if appropriate).
- A Release From Resident District Letter
- Student transcript and/or a list of current courses taken (Gull Lake Schools will assist in obtaining the transcript if not present at the time of enrollment.)
- Online readiness survey (available on Gull Lake's website)

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SUCCESSFUL VIRTUAL STUDENT

It is the expectation that students in the Gull Lake Virtual School will perform to the best of their ability in their virtual coursework at all times. Students should be ready to take responsibility for their own learning and the successful virtual students are able to do the following:

- Apply themselves to their studies in a focused and serious manner
- Work hard and become engaged in their lessons and activities
- Ask questions and be willing to explore their personal interests
- Improve areas of personal weakness while capitalizing on personal strengths
- Be self-disciplined with regards to study habits
- Maintain an active study regimen and stay on top of all assignment deadlines
- Recognize when assistance is needed and is able to seek that assistance in a timely manner
- Establish a strong communication line with instructors and mentor
- Be goal oriented and have a desire to learn and succeed
- Be self-disciplined with regards to study habits
- Frequently get support from their parent learning coach
- Work independently
- Manage time effectively
- Navigate on the computer
- Proficiently read and write

The following rubric can be used to determine the likelihood that your student will be a successful, independent learner in an online program:

Student Readiness	Technology Skills	Work & Study Habits	Learning Style	Technology/ Connectivity	Time Management	Interest/ Management	Reading/ Writing Skills	Support Services
Less Ready 	Student has little, if any, experience using a computer or the Internet, and has minimal desire to develop more skills in this area.	Student often needs reminders to complete routine assignments, often turns homework in late and is not able to spend 5 - 10 hours per week on each online course	Student is not a self- directed learner and often requires real-time feedback from teachers regarding basic directions and follow-up support	Student does not have consistent access to a computer and a reliable connection to the Internet from home or from school	Student does not manage his or her time effectively in doing research, basic studies and preparing for tests or quizzes	Student has little or no interest in the content area of the online course offering and has a negative or unrealistic attitude toward online learning	Student is reading below grade level and has experienced difficulty with routine writing assignments	In general, parents and school personnel do not actively support online learning and are unable or unwilling to provide support assistance.
	Student has limited experience using a computer and the Internet, and has expressed a strong interest in developing more skills in this area	Student sometimes needs reminders and assistance in completing routine assignments and has pledged to spend 5 - 10 hours per week on each online course enrollment	Student is beginning to demonstrate the behaviors of a self-directed learner and sometimes requires real-time feedback from teachers regarding basic directions and follow-up support	Student has limited access to a computer with low- speed service to the Internet from school or from home	Student is beginning to demonstrate effective time management skills in doing research, basic studies and preparing for tests and or quizzes	Student has an interest in the content area of the online course offering, but has expressed concerns about enrolling in an online course or has an unrealistic attitude toward online learning	Student is reading at grade level and has demonstrated limited proficiency with writing assignments	Student's support system is limited, parents and school personnel are somewhat supportive of enrollments in online courses
More Ready 	Student has strong computer skills and detailed experience using a word processor, email application and Web browser	Student rarely needs reminders or assistance in completing routine assignments and has demonstrated good independent study habits	In general the student is a self-directed learner and does not require real-time feedback from teachers regarding basic directions and follow-up support	Student has consistent access to a computer with moderate-speed service to the Internet from home, and from school	Student has demonstrated effective time management skills in doing research, basic studies and preparing for tests or quizzes	Student has an interest in the content area of the online course offering, and has a positive and realistic attitude toward online learning	Student is reading at or above grade level and has demonstrated success with a variety of writing assignments	Student has open access to school-based mentoring/ counseling services and parental support
	Student has excellent computer skills and significant experience using a word processor, email application and Web browser, and is comfortable downloading information from the Internet and using other technology tools and applications	Student does not need reminders or assistance in completing routine assignments, usually finishes homework ahead of time and has successfully completed an independent study experience or taken an online course.	Student is a self-directed learner and demonstrates a high level of comfort and skill in learning new material without requiring real-time feedback from teachers regarding basic directions and follow-up support and deals well with ambiguity	Student has daily access to a computer with high speed service to the Internet at home and at a convenient location in the school building before, during and after regular school hours	Student has demonstrated outstanding time management skills while participating in a variety of clubs, student organizations, sports and work activities	Student has a strong interest in the content area of the online course offering is highly motivated to enroll in an online course and has a positive and realistic attitude toward online learning	Student is reading above grade level, has strong reading comprehension skills and has demonstrated success with complex writing assignments	Student has regularly scheduled access to school-based mentoring/counseling services, parental support is strong and district has adopted policies and identified best practices to support students as online learners

Developed by Michigan Virtual University

VIRTUAL SCHOOL ROLES

Parent/Primary Learning Coach

The parent is the Primary Learning Coach for the student(s). Parental involvement from **DAY ONE** is critical for student success in the virtual program. It is the parent's responsibility to supervise and guide their students with their coursework. Parents have full access to all of the components of the program and can easily access their child's progress, teachers, instructional plan, schedule, mentor, lessons, and grades. A great deal of parental support is necessary for a child to succeed in online education. Parents and students are encouraged to check grades regularly.

The Gull Lake Virtual School Mentor

Each student is assigned a Gull Lake Virtual School Mentor/Learning Coach. The Mentor's role is to support the student with the student's online education. **The Mentor is not the student's instructor (see below)**. Gull Lake Mentors will send out weekly emails to students. Students are required to respond to Weekly Wednesday Check-in emails by Thursday at 3:00 pm. Your Gull Lake Virtual School Mentor can help with:

- Attendance Check-ins
- Computer glitches
- Needing access to locked out assessments/assignments
- Enrollment questions
- Reporting absences from program due to illness
- Requesting novels from the Gull Lake High School Library
- Resolving issues with instructors and/or coursework

The Gull Lake Mentors report directly to the Gull Lake Virtual School Principal. The Mentors follow the student progress in classes and also report to the student's Learning Coach/Parents regarding progress. Mentors contact students weekly. The Gull Lake Mentors' role is to support student success in the Gull Lake Virtual School Program.

The Online Instructor

Each contracted online program has instructors who design lessons, assignments, quizzes, and tests/exams. They also are responsible for grading the student's work. The instructor is to be the primary contact for students/parents with regard to course specific questions.

Students on occasion may experience a conflict with an instructor and in most cases these types of situations are easily resolved. If a conflict occurs, the following steps should be taken:

- 1st Step: Student should contact the instructor directly to discuss the conflict to resolve the issue
- 2nd Step: Student should contact their Mentor to inform them of the situation

- 3rd Step: If the conflict continues, the Mentor can work with the student and teacher for resolution
- 4th Step: If the conflict continues, the Principal will then be notified

The following table further illustrates these roles.

Guide to Roles for Participants in Virtual School

		K-5 Elementary Students	6-8 Middle School Students	9-12 High School Students
Parent Learning Coach	Time Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students in these grades require a great deal of oversight. For most students, the Parent Learning Coach's time commitment may require about six hours per day, or one hour per day for each online class taken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some students in these grades work very independently. For most full-time students, the Parent Learning Coach's time commitment may require about 2–3 hours per day; however, up to six hours a day may be needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students in these grades should be able to work very independently. For most full-time students, the Parent Learning Coach's time commitment may require approximately 30 minutes per day; however, up to six hours a day may be needed.
	Suggested Learning Coach Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set a schedule with varied activities and breaks • Assist with lessons • Monitor student comprehension and grades • Communicate frequently with teacher and mentor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the transition to more independent learning • Assist with some lessons • Monitor student comprehension and grades • Communicate with teachers and mentors, but refer student to teacher and/or mentor as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and support a teen's growing independence • Verify that lessons and assessments are completed • Communicate with teachers and mentors, but refer student to teacher and/or mentor as needed
Teacher	Instructional Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigns lessons • Grades tests and assignments • Contacts Parent Learning Coach and Mentor as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigns lessons • Grades tests and assignments • Contacts Parent Learning Coach and Mentor as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigns lessons • Grades tests and assignments • Contacts Parent Learning Coach and Mentor as necessary
Mentor	Mentor Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as the local "eyes and ears" for the online instructor • Track student progress in online courses • Communicate with the online instructor, school administration and parents • Address any concerns to school administration and/or the online course provider • Help student stay on track and successfully progress through coursework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as the local "eyes and ears" for the online instructor • Track student progress in online courses • Communicate with the online instructor, school administration and parents • Address any concerns to school administration and/or the online course provider • Help student stay on track and successfully progress through coursework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as the local "eyes and ears" for the online instructor • Track student progress in online courses • Communicate with the online instructor, school administration and parents • Address any concerns to school administration and/or the online course provider • Help student stay on track and successfully progress through coursework
Student	Learning Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of 30 hours per week or one hour per day, five days per week for each online class • Pacing guides/calendars are provided to keep students on track 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of 30 hours per week or one hour per day, five days per week for each online class • Pacing guides/calendars are provided to keep students on track 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of 30 hours per week or one hour per day, five days per week for each online class • Pacing guides/calendars are provided to keep students on track

Adapted from Connections Academy <http://www.connectionsacademy.com>

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Weekly Check-ins

Students enrolled in Gull Lake Virtual School are attending Gull Lake Community Schools even though they are participating in virtual academic classes off campus from home. As a Gull Lake Virtual School student, you are required by the school district and the State of Michigan to have weekly **“two way”** communications with Gull Lake Virtual School by communicating with the Gull Lake Learning Coach/Mentor. The communication needs to be **“Academic in Nature.”** **This is a mandatory attendance requirement.** Failure to respond to mentor communication on a regular weekly basis may result in a disciplinary action such as being dropped from the virtual program.

Gull Lake Mentors contact students using the students’ email addresses, and parents using parent email addresses. **Every Gull Lake Virtual School student will need his/her own email address.** Gull Lake can provide a student email if requested. Every week, on Wednesday, you will receive an email titled **“Wednesday Check-in Letter”** from your Gull Lake Virtual School Mentor/Learning Coach. Contained in this email will be important information for the week, learning strategies to help you as a student, questions to respond to, and/or words of encouragement as you progress through your classes. The students are required to reply to this email using their **first and last names** and respond to the academic questions every week by **Thursday at 3:00 PM. Responses must be grade level appropriate.** When this has occurred, the weekly mandatory attendance requirement has been completed. This task is similar to a teacher taking attendance in class. The students are encouraged to contact Mentors at any time to discuss concerns, problems with classes, any questions you have about your academic program, and respond to questions asked by the Gull Lake Mentor/Learning Coach.

All communication will be copied to Learning Coaches (parents) as well. If, on occasion, a student cannot send an email from his/her own email address, the student can call the Virtual School Principals’ office at 269- 548-3418 and leave a message for the Mentor. The student should leave his/her full name and the name of the Gull Lake Mentor. The mentor will then contact the student via phone to complete the check in.

State of Michigan **“Count Day”** Procedures

Twice a year the State of Michigan requires public school districts to submit a count of the number of students enrolled in their school districts. These official **“Count Days”** are the first Wednesday in October and the Second Wednesday in February. On the official Count Day, students will be required to log into all their virtual classes and then contact their Gull Lake Mentor that they have logged in and worked in their classes. In addition to logging in on Count Day, the student will be required to continue to log into each of their virtual classes each day for the next ten days during the Count Day period (the Count Day window). This will not be difficult since you are expected to work regularly in your classes to complete your coursework. The **“Count Day”** requirement is very important for Gull Lake Community Schools, the State of Michigan, and the student’s participation with Gull Lake Virtual School.

State of Michigan and College Entrance Testing Information: MSTEP, MME, PSAT, SAT

To measure student progress, students will be tested in accordance with State standards and District policy. If you are a full-time third to twelfth grade GLVS student taking “core” classes, you will be expected to participate in the appropriate grade-level assessments. You must appear at the designated Gull Lake Virtual School location to take your state testing in order to continue in the seat time waiver program. These appropriate grade level assessments include:

MSTEP: Students in third through twelfth grade will be administered the MSTEP exam in late April and early May. The test will be used to determine whether students are meeting or exceeding the Michigan Curriculum Standards.

MME: All eleventh grade students or seniors who have not already taken it will be expected to participate in the MME in the spring. This test consists of the SAT college entrance exam, the Work Keys exam, and the Michigan Student Test of Educational Preparedness (M-STEP). The SAT/Work Keys portion of the MME is given in April to all juniors in the State of Michigan. Students will also be able to submit their SAT test score for admission to colleges and universities.

PSAT: Ninth and tenth grade students will take the PSAT test in the fall of each school year. This test is in preparation for the SAT college entrance exam that is administered in the Junior year

The tests are generally administered at the Gull Lake High School, Middle School or Administration Building. Students will receive information regarding the test sites and time.

Care of Course Materials

All materials for student classes will be sent directly from Odysseyware, JST, Michigan Virtual, and/or Lincoln Learning Solutions. **It is the student’s responsibility to inventory the materials, save all of the paperwork and course information so materials can be returned at the end of the course.** This includes materials needed for science labs. The recommendation is to save the original boxes and packaging materials. In the case of missing materials, please contact the course instructor or your Gull Lake Mentor. If materials arrive damaged immediately contact your Mentor.

Student Absences

Students who are absent from the virtual program due to illness, computer issues, power outages, or family emergencies must inform their Gull Mentor/Learning Coach as soon as possible. Students must also contact their instructors to inform them about the issues that have forced them to be absent from their courses. Gull Lake Mentors will support students by contacting their virtual programs and individual instructors to confirm the absences.

Failure to log into the system for a 10 day period may result in the student being identified as being truant and/or possible recommendation to be removed from the virtual program and placed into a program that better fits the educational needs of the student. Failure to log into the system for a 30 calendar day period may result in the student being dropped from the virtual course.

Orientation Sessions

All on-line courses through Michigan Virtual, K12, Lincoln Learning Solutions, Odysseyware, and Fuel Education offer some kind of online orientation class to every registered student. The purpose is to help the student and the parent learning coach to become familiar with virtual education. The orientation may be integrated into the first lessons of the course or, in the case of K12, be offered as a separate class. K12 students and parents should attend and participate in this online orientation class.

These orientation classes are critical to success since the student will be using the computer at least 5-6 hours a week per class to access educational content, communicate with instructors and mentors, conduct research, participate in lessons, complete assignments, and take assessments. Students, with the support of their parent learning coaches, who have been the most successful in the virtual school program have completed the online orientation classes.

SCHEDULING OF VIRTUAL COURSES

Students enrolled in the Gull Lake Virtual School will make course selections based on high school and middle school requirements, the Gull Lake Mentor and Parent/Learning Coach input, prior academic work, and student interest. The catalogs for courses through K12, Fuel Education, Odysseyware, Lincoln Learning Solutions, and Michigan Virtual School are available online at the Gull Lake Virtual School website.

Elementary (Grades K-5)

For the student who is enrolled in elementary classes, some choices may be available regarding electives (music, art, languages). All full-time elementary students will have 6 classes which are run in a full-year format.

Specific to the K12 program, students who are taking classes are enrolled in a Mastery Learning Model. Students are not advanced to the next lesson until they have demonstrated mastery on their current lessons. Since this program is sequential, each lesson builds on the previous lesson. Therefore, mastering the current lesson is set at a minimum of 80% mastery of the content of the lesson. Students have the opportunity to retake assessments when they did not meet 80% mastery. Students need to restudy to review course material and wait a minimum of thirty minutes before retaking the assessment. The need of Multiple retakes of assessments may result in developing “guessing strategies” that do not reflect real learning. Instructors may place lessons back onto a student’s plan if multiple retakes become a concern.

Middle School (Grades 6-8)

For the student who is enrolled in middle school classes, some choices may be available regarding electives (music, art, languages). All full-time students will have 6 classes which are run in a semester format

High School Completion

For the student enrolled in high school classes, careful consideration is given to the level of the classes, credits already earned, past history with classes, and the requirements toward graduation or completion of high school. Some courses may not be available during certain semesters. Please carefully read the course description and note the prerequisites for the classes. All full-time high school students enrolled in a semester format must take 6 classes. High school students enrolled in the trimester schedule will take 5 classes. The class schedule will reflect required classes and electives and Gull Lake Mentors and the Virtual School Principal will review the final schedules.

Students enrolled in Gull Lake Virtual School may come from Gull Lake Community Schools, other traditional public and private schools, Gull Lake's Homeschool Partnership, or they have been homeschooled.

Students completing their academic education through Gull Lake Virtual School will receive either a Gull Lake Community Schools Diploma or a Gull Lake Community Schools Certificate of Completion depending on their academic background and coursework that has been completed.

Gull Lake Community Schools Diploma

Requirements for students receiving a State of Michigan endorsed diploma through the Gull Lake Virtual School:

- 24 credits with official documentation/transcripts for all credits (22 minimum credits required to graduate)
- Completed all State of Michigan graduation requirements
- Completed all Gull Lake Community Schools requirements

The requirements include English (4 credits), Math (4 credits), Science (3 credits), Social Studies (3 credits- including .5 Civics and .5 Economics), Arts (1 credit), Physical Education/Health (1 credit), Language (2 credits), and electives.

Gull Lake Community Schools Certificate of Completion issued through the Gull Lake Virtual School

Students receiving a Certificate of Completion through the Gull Lake Virtual School:

- a. Will have any amount of credits
- b. Will have completed classes through Gull Lake Virtual School for at least one semester as a senior
- c. May or may not have completed State of Michigan graduation requirements
- d. Do not have official transcripts from Gull Lake or another school district for all 4 high school years

If a student has completed his/her education, she/he will receive a "Certificate of Completion" only for the classes completed through Gull Lake Virtual School.

Commencement

Students that satisfy all of the requirements for graduation will be invited to participate in the commencement activities with Gull Lake Community Schools.

GRADING POLICY

Weighted Grades

Students are encouraged to select an academic course of study that is intellectually challenging. Advanced coursework (AP) opportunities require expectations that are well beyond the parameters of the high school classroom. The course work opportunities will mandate higher cognitive skills, more rigorous demands of reading, writing, research, language, and extra commitment of time.

To reflect the higher standards, the grades earned in these coursework experiences may be “weighted” on the student’s grade point average. An additional 0.7 on the grade point average scale will modify each passing grade, in the advanced placement classes. For further information regarding weighted grades and/or for applying to have a course(s) weighted, please contact the Gull Lake Virtual High School Principal.

High School Grading Scale

High School students’ grades are usually sent to students as percentages. The percentages may reflect current work submitted, amount of coursework completed, and/or cumulative progress. Cumulative percentages are the grades that indicate the points earned vs. the total points for the class. The cumulative percentages will be converted to letter grades. Final grades are letter grades on all transcripts. The grading scale that is used for letter grades is:

0 to 59% F (no credit)	78 - 79 C+
60 - 62 D-	80 - 82 B-
63 - 67 D	83 - 87 B
68 - 69 D+	88 - 89 B+
70 - 72 C-	90 - 92 A-
73 - 77 C	93 - 100 A

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Eligible students enrolled in the Gull Lake Virtual School Program are eligible to participate in Gull Lake Community Schools’ extracurricular activities, including all sports teams. Virtual School students are subject to the same policies and procedures outlined in the GLHS handbook. Academic eligibility is strictly enforced for both GLHS students and Virtual students. It is the coaches’ responsibility to verify academic eligibility.

ACADEMIC PROGRESS IN VIRTUAL COURSEWORK

Students in the Gull Lake Virtual School should be able to demonstrate consistent academic progress in the courses that they have selected in their respective program. Occasionally a student may experience challenges in a specific course; however, there are support services in place to help student succeed. If a student continues to fail or drop out of courses, that may be an indication that the online format is not the best vehicle for them to achieve their educational goals. At that time a recommendation may be made to have the student removed from the Gull Lake Virtual School and be placed in a different program that may be better suited for their abilities.

IEP and 504 PLANS Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

The nature of the Gull Lake Virtual School permits us to provide a free appropriate public education and many of the most frequently used accommodations to many students identified as having one or more disabilities as defined by IDEA and Section 504. However, there are some programs and services which cannot be satisfactorily provided in a virtual setting. All program and placement decisions will be made by the student's IEP or Section 504 team.

Parents/guardians who have questions about IDEA or who wish to have their student evaluated for special services should contact the Special Education Office at 269-548-3416.

Late Work and Course Extensions

The timely submission of assignments is the hallmark of a successful online student. Students that do not turn in assignments during the course of the semester by the due dates established by their virtual online provider may face a grade penalty. In rare cases, if there are extenuating circumstances that can be verified by the student's mentor or parent, there may be a possibility for the student to receive additional time for a particular assignment. That decision rests entirely at the teacher's discretion, however. These requests are considered on a case by case basis and may not be approved.

For students that wish to have the course extended beyond the assigned semester end date, a formal request needs to be made by the student 4 weeks prior to the course end date. In order to qualify for an extension, the course must be over 50% complete with a passing grade. The request would be made to the Mentor, who would then notify the Principal of the virtual program. If the course extension is approved, the virtual vendor would be notified of the extension and the student would have the extra time to complete the course.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

As students submit and complete work with the Gull Lake Virtual School, they need to be aware of the concept of Academic Integrity and the guidelines that they should follow to ensure that they are making a sincere effort to learn, while avoiding cheating, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty.

Academic Integrity means that students are completing and submitting **their own** work and that the papers, assessments, and completed assignments represent **their own** efforts and abilities. **Students are expected to follow the Academic Integrity guidelines for the Gull Lake Virtual School and the virtual program in which they are enrolled.**

When students exhibit a lack of Academic Integrity, they are putting themselves in a situation that may have consequences for their actions that could range from receiving a zero on an assignment to possibly failing the course. Because of these serious consequences, it is important that the student is aware of what actions constitute a lack of Academic Integrity. Examples and definitions of these actions follow.

Cheating

Cheating means that a student has broken the rules for an assignment. As an example, a student would be cheating if he or she gets the answers for an assignment from someone, or looks up the answers on the internet instead of figuring out the correct answer on his or her own. Other types/examples of cheating include copying from an answer key or plagiarism.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined by Dictionary.com as the “unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one’s own original work”. Simply changing some of the words in a document does not make the work your own and could still be a form of plagiarism.

Some examples that demonstrate a lack of Academic Integrity and could be considered plagiarism include:

- 1) Improper or lack of citations in written assignments (no footnotes, bibliography)
- 2) Copying and pasting written work or resources from the internet to pass it off as original work
- 3) Recopying written work of another author
- 4) Students submitting other students’ assignments or work as their own

The instructors of the virtual programs that the Gull Lake Virtual School works with are very good at spotting Academic Integrity issues and notifying the Gull Lake Mentor staff that there are problems. Most virtual school instructors have access to programs that scan students’ written work to search for plagiarism. These instructors will know if the work is not original and from where it was obtained. **Many instructors have guidelines regarding Academic Integrity and plagiarism stated right in their course outlines. Students are expected to know these guidelines and follow them.**

Students are expected to be aware of the guidelines regarding Academic Integrity at the Gull Lake Virtual School and with their online virtual classes. If students have any questions about the Academic Integrity policies, they are advised to contact their instructors and their Gull Lake Virtual School Mentor.

DUE PROCESS RIGHTS

Before a student loses class credit or is dropped from Virtual School, there are specific procedures that must be followed.

Academic Integrity Issues

When the Gull Lake Virtual School becomes aware of an Academic Integrity issue involving a student, the following procedure will be put into place:

1st Occurrence within a school year: Student, instructor, and mentor will communicate about the Academic Integrity issue. Communications will be shared with the student's parent/at-home learning coach and the Gull Lake Virtual School Principal as well. Student will have the opportunity to re-submit the assignment/exam in question **if the student's virtual program allows them to do so.**

2nd Occurrence within a school year (any class): No credit for the assignment/exam. Students will receive a zero for the assignment/exam in question with no opportunity to resubmit or redo the work.

3rd Occurrence within a school year (any class): Parent Meeting with possible removal from the course, potential failing grade and the possibility of being assigned to an appropriate educational environment within a local school district which may be better suited to the student's learning style.

The decision to be removed from the course or from Virtual School may be appealed to the Principal in writing within ten days after the Parent Meeting. **Any resulting suspension from co-curricular and extra-curricular activities may not be appealed, nor can any appeal be made regarding loss of credit for the assignment or exam.**

Removal from Virtual School

When a student is being considered for removal from Virtual School due to failure to submit weekly check-ins to the mentor, to log into classes for an extended period, or otherwise fail to meet the requirements of Virtual School, the student will receive a formal letter of notification addressed to the parents. This letter will contain the reason(s) for removal and related documented evidence.

Within ten days after notification of removal, the removal can be appealed, in writing, to the Principal.