

2024-2025

# Student Handbook



**HIGHPOINT  
VIRTUAL ACADEMY  
OF MICHIGAN**

## Welcome to Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan!

*Dear Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan Family,*

*Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year at Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan. We are delighted you have selected our school for this portion of your academic journey. At Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan (HVAM), we believe the relationship between the student, family and teacher is the heart of a successful school experience.*

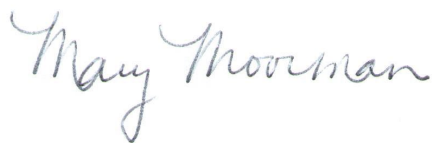
*We are committed to putting students first and maximizing their potential to learn and achieve. With our online platform students discover their unique potential at the right pace and, importantly, with the right tools.*

*Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan is serving students across the state of Michigan. Our goals for this school year are for students to realize the highest levels of academic achievement while experiencing a strong, safe, and positive school community. The K12 Virtual Schools LLS (Stride K12) curriculum and our school programs are designed with these goals in mind. Our teachers are your strong partners, and they are eager to support and to assist you and your family throughout the school year.*

*Please keep this document on hand. This handbook contains important calendars, phone numbers, and descriptions of programs.*

*We have an exciting year ahead of us and are pleased that you have selected our school. We welcome your comments, concerns, and vision for our community. We look forward to a rewarding year for all!*

*Academically yours,*

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Moorman". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name below.

*Mary Moorman  
Head of School  
Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan*

*210 E Mesick Avenue  
Mesick, MI 49668  
855-337-8243*

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## Our Mission and Vision

The mission of Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan (HVAM) is to provide an innovative virtual education experience to prepare students for success in a range of opportunities beyond high school.

This mission has an expansive vision that intends to reach students throughout the state, including rural areas, and prepare them to graduate with the knowledge and skills to become productive and responsible citizens. HVAM students will develop as effective communicators, inquisitive learners, decision makers, and critical thinkers who develop tangible postsecondary paths that allow them to graduate competent in their chosen job skills or strongly prepared for further postsecondary endeavors.

The HVAM experience seeks to prepare students to meet the challenges of the 21st century as active, strong, and productive members of society by employing strategies that may include:

- Engaging them in a personally relevant and rigorous curriculum;
- Creating partnerships with postsecondary institutions throughout Michigan;
- Establishing hands-on career days and workshops; and
- Developing an annual speaker series with various industries

The vision of HVAM is that it will utilize an enriched online and offline learning environment to deliver core curriculum, engaging electives, World Languages, and AP courses; targeted instructional support by experienced certified teachers working in conjunction with learning coaches (usually parents or guardians but can be any caring adult that the parent or guardian selects); and extended support services and community partnerships to boost student achievement. We plan to offer a powerful model for effective public education that meets the unique needs of its students and families ensuring that every student has the opportunity to reach his or her true potential in accordance with the Michigan Academic Standards.

## Highpoint Office: 231-307-4707 or (Toll Free) 855-337-8243

Main Office (Reception) Ext: 7001

Head of School - Mary Moorman Ext: 7002 ([mmoorman@highpointva.org](mailto:mmoorman@highpointva.org))

Special Programs Manager - Christina Brasil Ext: 7010 ([cbrasil@highpointva.org](mailto:cbrasil@highpointva.org))

Grades TK-2 Principal - Timothy Jalkanen Ext: 7800 ([tjalkanen@highpointva.org](mailto:tjalkanen@highpointva.org))

Grades 3-5 Principal - Beth Simon Ext: 7861 ([esimon@highpointva.org](mailto:esimon@highpointva.org))

Grades 6-8 (Middle School) Principal - Stacy Little Ext: 7839 ([slittle@highpointva.org](mailto:slittle@highpointva.org))

Grades 9-12 (High School) Principal - Laura Wiechertjes Ext: 7828 ([lwiechertjes@highpointva.org](mailto:lwiechertjes@highpointva.org))

Grades 6-12 Assistant Principal – Rachel Clore Ext: 7920 ([rclore@highpointva.org](mailto:rclore@highpointva.org))

Student Support Administrator/Title IX Coordinator - Julia Zoutendyk Ext: 7008 ([jzoutendyk@highpointva.org](mailto:jzoutendyk@highpointva.org))

Homeless and Foster Student Liaison - Tara Henson Ext: 7712 ([thenson@highpointva.org](mailto:thenson@highpointva.org))

504 Coordinator - Emily Rammelkamp Ext: 7830 ([erammelkamp@highpointva.org](mailto:erammelkamp@highpointva.org))

English Language Learner Coordinator - Erin Stanfill Ext: 1042 ([estanfill@highpointva.org](mailto:estanfill@highpointva.org))

Registrar (Records) – Abby Spoor Ext: 1020 ([aspoor@highpointva.org](mailto:aspoor@highpointva.org))

**Report Attendance/Absences** to [hvamattendance@highpointva.org](mailto:hvamattendance@highpointva.org)

**K12 Student Technical Support:** 866-K12-CARE (866-512-2273)

**Withdraw Requests** should be directed to your Student’s Advisor or Homeroom Teacher.

## HVAM Where to Go for Help

**Office Phone: 855-337-8243**

Office Fax: 231-375-2245

Address: 210 E. Mesick Ave. PO Box 596 Mesick, MI 49668

**Head of School: Mary Moorman ([mmoorman@highpointva.org](mailto:mmoorman@highpointva.org)) X 7002**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Stride K12 Technical Support/ Customer Care</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Technical Support:</b> <a href="http://www.help.k12.com">www.help.k12.com</a> <b>OR</b> <b>1-866-K12-CARE</b></p> <p><b>Press 2 at the Prompt for Options:</b> Option 1: Materials Options 2: Technical Support Option 3: Login Information and Online Systems Support</p>	<p><b>K5 Academics</b> <b>Homeroom Teacher</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Daily Lessons</li> <li>✓ Assessments</li> <li>✓ Class Connects</li> <li>✓ Your Child's Progress/ Grades</li> <li>✓ Course Placement</li> <li>✓ Student and Family Concerns</li> <li>✓ Please contact your Special Education Teacher for concerns related to the IEP and related services.</li> </ul> <p><b>Grades TK- 2 Principal</b> <b>Tim Jalkanen Ext: 7800</b></p> <p><b>Grades 3-5 Principal</b> <b>Beth Simon Ext: 7861</b></p>	<p><b>MS/HS Academics</b> <b>Course Content Teachers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Course Content</li> <li>✓ Assessments</li> <li>✓ Class Connects</li> <li>✓ Grades</li> <li>✓ Student and Family Concerns</li> <li>✓ Please contact your Special Education Teacher for concerns related to the IEP and related services.</li> </ul> <p><b>Grades 6-8 Principal</b> <b>Stacy Little Ext: 7839</b></p> <p><b>Grades 9-12 Principal</b> <b>Laura Wiechertjes Ext: 7828</b></p> <p><b>Grades 6-12 Assist. Principal</b> <b>Rachel Clore Ext: 7920</b></p>
<p><b>Family Academic Support Team FAST</b> <b>Advisors (Grades TK-12)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Progress/Grades</li> <li>✓ Attendance</li> <li>✓ Student and Family Concerns</li> <li>✓ Withdrawals</li> <li>✓ Change in Address/Phone/ Learning Coach</li> <li>✓ Computer Approvals</li> <li>✓ Transfers and Withdraws</li> <li>✓ Unresolved Technical Support Issues</li> </ul>	<p><b>Family Support</b> <b>Title IX/Harassment and Discrimination Reporting</b> <b>Julia Zoutendyk Ext: 7008</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Advisor Team</li> <li>✓ Family Engagement</li> <li>✓ Facebook Page and Newsletters</li> <li>✓ Learning Coach Committee/Learning Coach Teacher Organization</li> <li>✓ Navigation/Getting Started</li> <li>✓ Outings</li> </ul>	<p><b>Counselors</b> <b>Grades K-5: Susanna Franks X 1003</b> <b>Grades 6-8: Brittany Mellendorf X 7865</b> <b>High School by Last Name:</b> <b>A-D: Amy Teske X</b> <b>E-K: Katie Wooten X 1051</b> <b>L-R: Katie Rueger X 1031</b> <b>S-Z: Leanne Lazar X 1095</b> <b>Early Middle College: Jesse Harrison X 7713</b> <b>Dual Enrollment: Dori Swiercz X 7926</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Course Assignments</li> <li>✓ Social/Emotional Concerns</li> <li>✓ Credits/ Transcripts</li> <li>✓ Graduation Planning</li> <li>✓ Post-Secondary/Dual Enrollment</li> <li>✓ Transcripts</li> </ul>
<p><b>Attendance/Truancy</b> <b>Report Attendance to:</b> <a href="mailto:hvamattendance@highpointva.org">hvamattendance@highpointva.org</a></p> <p><b>Truancy Liaison</b> <b>K-5: Muaz Redzic X 7017</b> <b>6-8: Christine Dankert X 7935</b> <b>9-12: Gary Mohr X 7825</b></p>	<p><b>Special Programs Support</b> <b>Christina Brasil Ext: 7010</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Special Education</li> </ul> <p><b>Emily Rammelkamp Ext: 7830</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 504 Plans</li> </ul> <p><b>Erin Stanfill Ext: 1042</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ English Language Learner Support</li> </ul> <p><b>Tara Henson Ext: 7712</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Homeless/McKinney-Vento and Foster Care Support</li> </ul>	<p><b>Main Office: X7001</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Records/Transcripts</li> <li>✓ Immunizations</li> <li>✓ Unsure who to talk to? Call the Main Office and we'll connect you!</li> </ul>

## Where To Go With Questions Or Concerns

Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan staff recognizes that life at school does not always run smoothly. As problems arise, school personnel and parents must collaborate to seek solutions. Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan staff also realizes that parents and students do not always know what to do or where to seek out answers. Parents often give up and become frustrated if problems remain unsolved. Please follow these procedures for general information or for assistance in resolving a problem:

**Step 1:** All concerns and issues should first be directed to the student’s teacher. If a Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan teacher cannot resolve the issue (e.g., materials and computer issues) he or she directs the parent/guardian to the appropriate contact for assistance. The Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan teacher will monitor the concern to ensure resolution.

**Step 2:** If the issue or concern is about the Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan teacher, parents are advised to contact the grade level principal/administrator as applicable.

**Step 3:** If the concern is not resolved at the teacher or Principal levels, parents/responsible adults are advised to contact the Head of School.

## Emergency Closings and Communication Procedure:

In the event of an emergency or if a scheduled outing or activity such as state testing must be cancelled, Highpoint will notify families via email, our family Facebook page, and an “Autodialer” call via School Messenger.

## Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan Academic Calendar

Highpoint will make educational services available to pupils for a minimum of at least 1,098 hours during a school year, and will ensure that each pupil participates in the educational program for at least 1,098 hours during a school year. The school calendar provides 180 instructional days for students.

HVAM will afford students 24/7 access to the online school’s curriculum and lessons throughout the school year. Students will be expected to log into the online school every official school day for approximately 7 hours although this may vary from day to day depending on lesson length and individual student needs.

Attendance will be recorded based on log in’s, communications with teachers, completion of course work, and participation in class activities. In the event that a student has login and communications that do not substantiate sufficient lesson completion, the school will work with the learning coach, teachers, counselor, and academic administrator in place.

## Academic Calendar:

September 3, 2024: First Day of School

October 24, 2024: Quarter 1 Ends

October 25, 2024: No School - Fall Break

November 5, 2024: Student Half Day

November 27, 2024: Half Day

November 28-29, 2024: No School - Thanksgiving Break

December 23, 2024- January 1, 2025: No School - Winter Break (Classes Resume January 2)

January 17, 2025: End of Semester 1

January 20, 2025: No School- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday



January 21, 2025: Semester 2 Begins  
February 17, 2025: No School - Presidents' Day  
March 21, 2025: End of Quarter 3  
March 24- 28, 2025 No School: Spring Break  
May 26, 2025: No School - Memorial Day  
June 6, 2025: End of Semester 2, Last Day of School

## **Non-Discrimination Equal Educational Opportunity Policy**

Any form of discrimination or harassment can be devastating to an individual's academic progress, social relationship and/or personal sense of self-worth. As such, the Board of Directors does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation or gender identity), disability, age (except as authorized by law), religion, military status, ancestry or genetic information in its educational programs or activities and will not permit discrimination in any of these categories from its Educational Service Provider.

The Board will not permit discrimination of the employment practices of its Educational Service Provider as they relate to students and will not tolerate harassment of any kind.

Equal educational opportunities shall be available to all students, without regard to the Protected Classes, age (unless age is a factor necessary to the normal operation or the achievement of any legitimate objective of the program/activity), place of residence within the boundaries of the Academy, or social or economic background, to learn through the curriculum offered in this Academy. Educational programs shall be designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

Information relative to special accommodation, grievance, procedure, and the designated responsible official for compliance with Title VI, Title IX, and ADA, and Section 504 may be obtained by contacting the school.

## **Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Sex (Title IX)**

### **Title IX Coordinator:**

Julia Zoutendyk  
855-337-8243 X 7008  
[jzoutendyk@highpointva.org](mailto:jzoutendyk@highpointva.org)

For a copy of the complete Title IX policy including Grievance Procedures and Investigative Process, please contact Julia Zoutendyk or go to <https://hvam.k12.com/title-ix-non-discrimination-notice.html>.

### **Summary:**

The Board of Directors of the Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan does not discriminate on the basis of sex (including sexual orientation or gender identity), in its education programs or activities, and is required by Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, and its implementing regulations, not to discriminate in such a manner. The requirement not to discriminate in its education program or activity extends to admission and employment. The Board is committed to maintaining an education and work environment that is free from discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment.

The Board prohibits Sexual Harassment that occurs within its education programs and activities. When the Academy has actual knowledge of Sexual Harassment in its education program or activity against a person in the United States, it shall promptly respond in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent.

Pursuant to its Title IX obligations, the Board is committed to eliminating Sexual Harassment and will take appropriate action when an individual is determined responsible for violating this policy.

Educational Service Provider employees, students, third-party vendors and contractors, guests, and other members of the Academy community who commit Sexual Harassment are subject to the full range of disciplinary sanctions set forth in this policy. The Board will provide persons who have experienced Sexual Harassment ongoing remedies as reasonably necessary to restore or preserve access to the Academy's education programs and activities.

The Board has adopted a grievance process that provides for the prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints alleging any action that is prohibited by Title IX and/or its implementing regulations. The grievance process is included in the full policy which is available at: <https://hvam.k12.com/title-ix-and-non-discrimination-notice/> The grievance process specifically addresses how to report or file a complaint of sex discrimination, how to report or file a formal complaint of Sexual Harassment, and how the Academy will respond.

### **Report of Sexual Discrimination/Harassment**

Any person may report sex discrimination, including Sexual Harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or Sexual Harassment), in person, by mail, by telephone, or by electronic mail, using the Title IX Coordinator's contact information listed above, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's oral or written report. Reports may be made at any time (including during non-business hours), by using the telephone number or electronic mail address, or by mail to the office address listed for the Title IX Coordinator.

## **Rights and Responsibilities for Students and Parents**

### **Responsibilities and Rights of Students:**

All students share with the administration and staff a responsibility to develop a safe learning environment within school. Students shall have the responsibilities and rights to do the following:

- Be on time and attend school daily including all required ClassConnect sessions and Asynchronous work both offline and in the online school;
- Put forth a conscientious effort in all school assignments;
- Have knowledge of and conform to the school rules and regulations and applicable laws;
- Use appropriate speech refraining from indecent, obscene or foul language;
- Report incidents or activities to a staff member that may threaten or disrupt the school;
- Obtain a public-school education up to 21 years of age;
- Not be excluded from public schools or from school privileges because the student is married, pregnant, has a disability, is eligible for special education services and programs or because of race, gender, color, religion, sexual orientation (known or perceived), or national origin;
- Not be subject of corporal punishment;
- Be afforded discipline procedures as outlined in this document;
- Request and receive interpretation and translation assistance for school-related matters if English is not their primary language.

### **Responsibilities and Rights of Parents/Guardians:**

- Ensure that their children between the ages of 5 and 21 enrolled in Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan attend school daily in accordance with the laws of the State of Michigan;
- Follow the daily plan and log attendance daily in the Online School;
- Enroll their child in another school if he/she withdraws from Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan;
- Present to the school administration any concern or complaint in a calm, reasoned manner;

- Work with their child daily to ensure that student is completing assignments;
- Know the rules set forth in this code and review the contents with their child(ren);
- Ensure that their child complies with all required testing and assessments, including but not limited to required state tests (M-STEP, PSAT, SAT, WIDA, ACT Workkeys, MI- Access) and STAR, scheduled by Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan;
- Ensure that the child has access to internet at all times. If the internet is out for more than 24 hours, travel to an alternative location such as a library will be required;
- Maintain a working email address and phone number and update with the school when it changes;
- Report absences to [hvamattendance@highpointva.org](mailto:hvamattendance@highpointva.org) within 24 hours.
- Ensure that their child receives the periodic health examinations and updates immunizations as required by law;
- Request the qualifications of their student's teachers or paraprofessionals including licensure including provisional status, area of undergraduate and graduate study and degrees;
- Receive regular official reports of their child's academic progress;
- Inspect, copy, and challenge according to the appropriate guidelines any and all information contained in their child's records;
- Receive an explanation for the basis of any grade given by the teacher;
- Request a conference with the teacher and/or the principal;
- Receive translations and/or interpretations of any written or verbal communications regarding their child and their child's education;
- Appeal disciplinary actions;
- Receive reasonable accommodations for any disability to have access to participate in their child's education, to the extent all parents are permitted to participate, upon request for such accommodation and proof of medical necessity.

## Parent Engagement Policy

The Board of Directors recognizes and values parents and families as children's first teachers and decision-makers in education. The Board believes that student learning is more likely to occur when there is an effective partnership between the school and the student's parents and family. Such a partnership between the home and school and greater involvement of parents and family members in the education of their children generally result in higher academic achievement, improved student behavior, and reduced absenteeism. This policy shall serve as the Academy policy.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), defines the term "parent" to include a legal guardian or other person standing in loco parentis (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare).

The term "family" is used to include a child's primary caregivers, who are not the biological parents, such as foster caregivers, grandparents, other family members and responsible adults who play significant roles in providing for the well-being of the child.

Family engagement is a collaborative relationship between families, educators, providers, and partners to support and improve the learning, development and health of every learner. The principles of family engagement include relationships as the cornerstone; positive learning environments; efforts tailored to address all families, so all learners are successful; purposeful and intentional efforts that clearly identify learner outcomes; and engaging and supporting families as partners in their child's education.

The HVAM Board is committed to:

- A. Relationships with Families
  - 1. cultivating school environments that are welcoming, supportive, and student-centered;
  - 2. providing professional development for school staff that helps build partnerships between families and schools;
  - 3. providing family activities that relate to various cultures, languages, practices, and customs, and bridge economic and cultural barriers;
  - 4. providing coordination, technical support and other support to assist schools in planning and implementing family engagement activities.
- B. Effective Communication
  - 1. providing information to families to support the proper health, safety, and well-being of their children;
  - 2. providing information to families about school policies, procedures, programs, and activities;
  - 3. promoting regular and open communication between school personnel and students' family members;
  - 4. communicating with families in a format and language that is understandable, to the extent practicable;
  - 5. providing information and involving families in monitoring student progress;
  - 6. providing families with timely and meaningful information regarding Michigan's academic standards, State and local assessments, and pertinent legal provisions;
  - 7. preparing families to be involved in meaningful discussions and meetings with school staff.
- C. Volunteer Opportunities
  - 1. providing volunteer opportunities for families to support their children's school activities;
  - 2. supporting other needs, such as transportation and childcare, to enable families to participate in school-sponsored family engagement events.
- D. Learning at Home
  - 1. offering training and resources to help families learn strategies and skills to support at-home learning and success in school;
  - 2. working with families to establish learning goals and help their children accomplish these goals;
  - 3. helping families to provide a school and home environment that encourages learning and extends learning at home.
- E. Engaging Families in Decision Making and Advocacy
  - 1. engaging families as partners in the process of school review and continuous improvement planning;
  - 2. engaging families in the development of its Academy-wide parent and family engagement policy and plan, and distributing the policy and plan to families.
- F. Collaborating with the Community
  - 1. building constructive partnerships and connecting families with community-based programs and other community resources;
  - 2. coordinating and integrating parent and family engagement programs and activities with Academy initiatives and community-based programs that encourage and support families' participation in their children's education, growth, and development.

## Learning Coach School Involvement Opportunities

Highpoint offers multiple opportunities for Learning Coaches and Parents to be involved!

- 1) Surveys sent throughout the year to see how things are going. All responses are read and taken into consideration when making school policy and planning decisions.
- 2) Learning Coach Committee Meetings: Monthly Meetings covering timely topics in order to prepare LC's for relative items such as Testing. These meetings are also used to garner feedback on various topics as well as provide an opportunity for families to share celebrations and any concerns.
- 3) Parents-in-Action Committee: Highpoint's equivalence to PTO-type organizations. Come share ideas, help fundraise and brainstorm fun ideas for the school!
- 4) "Highpoint Virtual Academy Families" Facebook Page: This is a great place to get school-wide updates and reminders as well as look for Learning Coach advice, connect with families in your area, or help other families getting started.

## Objectionable Content Policy

Parents have the right to inspect any instructional materials used as part of the educational curriculum for their student. Instructional materials mean instructional content, regardless of format, that is provided to the student, including printed or representational materials, audio-visual materials, and materials available in electronic or digital formats (such as materials accessible through the Internet). Instructional materials do not include academic tests or academic assessments.

The following process is used if a parent/guardian finds material objectionable; he or she should contact his or her Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan teacher via email. Teachers will work with parents/guardians to find alternative lessons to meet the lesson objectives. An assessment for the lesson must be completed to show that the objectives have been met.

## Communication (My Info and Email)

Students and parents are able to contact their teachers through email. Staff emails will be made available by teachers and within the OLS system. Correspondence will be sent to Learning Coaches and families through their personal email addresses as provided during enrollment. Students will be contacted via their school-based email. It is expected that students and parent/guardian read their email at least once a day. Critical information is sent via email.

## Enrollment

The student's birth certificate or other legal documentation of the student's age is required at the time of student registration. A child may enroll in HVAM if he or she is less than twenty (20) years old on September 1 of the school year of enrollment. A child who is otherwise entitled to enroll in HVAM may enroll in kindergarten if the child is at least five (5) years of age on September 1 of the school year of enrollment, or under the early enrollment provisions of MCL 380.1147. (Age 5 by December 1 with an approved waiver.) HVAM's Kindergarten Principal shall assess the academic readiness of students whose parents/guardians submit a kindergarten waiver form for Kindergarten or the Transitional/Kindergarten Prep Program. HVAM's Kindergarten Principal shall approve or deny waivers based on their assessment and grade level seat availability.

Extended age eligibility may apply to certain students who qualify for special education services.

Students enrolling in school for the first time in Kindergarten or First Grade are required to submit proof of vision and hearing screening prior to the first day of school. This includes the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Vision Screening OR a statement, signed by a licensed eye care practitioner or medical/osteopathic physician

(optometrist or ophthalmologist), indicating that a child's eyes have been examined at least once after age three and before initial school entry may also be presented.

## Health Policy

The Board believes immunization is one of the most cost-effective measures to protect children from vaccine-preventable diseases. Accordingly, the Board requires that all students be properly immunized at the time of registration or not later than the first day of school pursuant to the provisions of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regulations.

However, students who do not meet the immunization requirements shall be admitted in accordance with Administrative Procedures. Transfer students shall not be admitted without proof of immunization as required by the State.

There are three (3) circumstances in which a required vaccine may be waived or delayed:

A valid medical contraindication exists to receiving the vaccine. The child's physician must certify the contraindication.

- A. The parent(s)/guardian(s) hold religious or philosophical beliefs against receiving a vaccination. Any parent or guardian who wants to claim a nonmedical waiver must receive education regarding the benefits of vaccination and the risks of disease from a county health department before obtaining the certified nonmedical waiver form through the Local Health Department, and present same to the appropriate Academy personnel.
- B. The child has received at least one (1) dose of each immunizing agent and the next dose(s) are not due yet.

Recent changes in Michigan law require that medical exemptions must be submitted in writing and must be signed by the child's physician using a State of Michigan approved medical contraindication form. Your physician will have this form. Your physician may not sign an exemption for any reason other than a medical contraindication.

Religious or philosophical exemptions will be permitted only after counseling has been completed in person with a health department nurse. The Religious or philosophical exemption form must be completed with a health department nurse after counseling has been completed. The exemption form must be signed by both the parent/guardian and the Health Department nurse and then stamped with an official health department stamp. Only State of Michigan approved exemption forms may be used. The completed exemption form may then be submitted to Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan. Any exemption forms which contain alterations or otherwise do not meet strict State of Michigan requirements may be rejected.

Please contact the Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan office with any questions regarding health requirements.

## Change of Home Address

In the event you change addresses after initial enrollment, please send an email to your teacher verifying the updated address. Be sure to include the names of all children associated with your household. You are to include in your Email:

- Previous address and new address (Required)
- New phone if applicable
- Effective date of address change (Required)
- Proof of residency

In addition to the email, you are required to submit the following documents to our office within ten days of receipt of this letter. Please be advised, the documents are state-mandated for all enrolled students. Failure to submit the

documents will cause your child to be out of compliance with state requirements.

Proof of Residence (please see below for acceptable documentation of residency). Submit ONE of the following:

- Valid driver's license
- Valid non-driver's license
- Current utility bill (gas, water, electric, sewage, cable and land line phone)
- Current mortgage statement
- Current residency card
- Deed, vehicle registration
- Property tax bill
- Current credit card bill

**School Address or Email:**

210 E Mesick Avenue PO Box 596 Mesick, MI 49668, [hvamdocs@highpointva.org](mailto:hvamdocs@highpointva.org)

### **Withdrawing From Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan**

Parents/guardians wishing to withdraw their children from the Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan must contact their teacher or advisor and complete a withdrawal form to fully process the withdrawal. The teacher will notify school officials of their decision. The Operations Manager or designee will confirm the withdrawal date once the form has been received and arrange for the return of all school equipment and materials. Failure to return all school equipment and materials in satisfactory condition may result in a collections action.

Families choosing to withdraw to homeschool their children will be asked to fill out a Homeschool Intent form.

### **Internet Service Provider (ISP) Reimbursement Program**

Families at Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan will receive ISP reimbursement checks twice per year at the rate of \$12.00 per month (per family) for the school year. Disbursements will be made in January and June of the school year provided that receipts are submitted to receive a reimbursement. Families must participate in the Online School, as well as have compliant attendance as described in the Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan Handbook, in order to qualify for ISP reimbursement. Additionally, there must be current proof of residence for each student enrolled. Families are eligible for ISP reimbursement for the month in which they enroll.

Please be aware that if an ISP check is lost, Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan does not automatically reissue a check to that family. If a check is lost, parents/guardian(s) must contact the school office within sixty days, or a replacement may not be issued. Students must be in good standing, which means that they have participated in all online learning opportunities, testing, supplemental activities, have appropriate progress and up to date attendance to receive their internet reimbursement.

### **School Supplies**

Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan provides most curriculum items needed to participate in school. There are times when household and consumable items are needed to complete a lesson. Be sure to use the Advanced Planning feature through the Online School to assist with upcoming lessons requiring certain materials. A suggested school supply list is provided by the teacher at the beginning of the school year. Please contact your teacher if you need assistance with purchasing needed supplies.

## Printer Ink Usage Guidelines

Printer ink is expected to be used sparingly and only for school needs. We encourage families to use the student pages instead of printing. Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan does not provide printer ink cartridges or refills. Refills are the responsibility of the family. To conserve ink, it is recommended that your printer is set to always print in fast draft mode. To set for fast draft mode:

- Go to your Start menu
- Go to Printers and Faxes
- Right click on your printer name
- Scroll down to Properties
- Click on the Advanced tab
- Click on Printing Defaults
- In the drop-down menu under Print Quality, choose Fast Draft
- Click Apply, then click OK

## Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan Attendance Policy and Instructional Time

The law in Michigan governing compulsory attendance requires a parent, legal guardian, or other person having control or charge of a child age six to eighteen to send the child to school during the entire school year (totaling 1,098 total hours), except under the limited circumstances specified in subsection (3) of [MCL 380.1561](#).

Although the compulsory school attendance law does not apply to children under the age of six, a child who is at least five years of age by November 1 of the school year and is a resident of a school district, which provides kindergarten work, is entitled to enroll in kindergarten [MCL 380.1147].

## Attendance Responsibilities

Attendance is logged daily in the Online School by parent/guardian/ learning coach for any offline time spent learning. This includes Physical Education, Health, studying, workbooks, etc. Time spent in live ClassConnects and online course work is automatically logged for students. Instructional time can occur at any time during the day and on any day of the week although an average of 7 hours daily is required to meet the required 1,098 required by Michigan legislation. Instructional time must directly relate to lesson objectives which are aligned to the Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCE).

### **The following criteria are counted toward instructional time:**

- Pupil attended a live lesson from the teacher;
- Pupil logged into a lesson or lesson activity and the login can be documented;
- Pupil and teacher engaged in a subject-oriented telephone conversation;
- There is documentation of an email dialogue between the pupil and teacher; OR
- There is documentation of activity/work between the learning coach and pupil.
- Schedules may be blocked or flexible; however, attendance in each course needs to be logged each week.
- Approximately 6-7 hours daily must be logged to meet the state's hourly requirements.
- Extended family travel, except during normal school vacation periods, requires written notification and vacation contract approval by the Head of School or designee. This should be completed at least one week prior to the extended absence.
- All families must attend a Parent (Guardian) Orientation and the new students will attend "Introduction to Online Learning" course via the online school.
- The family must maintain regular communication with the Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan teachers.
- Students and parents/guardians/learning coaches must check their email, and phone messages daily. Return response should be within 24 hours or on the next business day.



- Students must attend all “Required” Live Class Connect sessions for direct instruction as directed by their teachers.

### Process for Attendance Monitoring

Students are required to follow the school calendar. Instructional time can be entered on any day (e.g., weekends, holidays, etc.). Students are expected to log into the OLS (K-5) LMS (6-12) each scheduled school calendar day. **School days in which students are working 100% offline must be communicated to his/her homeroom teacher or advisor to ensure proper attendance verification. Identification of days with logged attendance but no online activity may result in an unexcused absence.**

**Reporting Absences:** Absences should be reported by 9 AM on the day of the student’s absence by emailing [hvamattendance@highpointva.org](mailto:hvamattendance@highpointva.org). Please copy your Advisor and Homeroom teacher if you are able.

- Note that it may take up to 24 hours for the excusal to be updated in the OLS.
- Emails will not be returned unless the attendance team has a question regarding your absence.

**Excused Absences:** The school recognizes the following as excused absences:

- student illness or medical appointment,
- death in the family,
- prior permission to leave school by parents/guardian(s) and administrator,
- approved family vacations,
- approved college visitations,
- required court appearance,
- religious observations,
- family emergencies,
- counseling or administrative appointments,
- Technology (see below)

For an absence to be registered as excused, a parent or guardian must submit a written explanation to the teacher or attendance email ([hvamattendance@highpointva.org](mailto:hvamattendance@highpointva.org)). Excuse notes or emails must state the student’s name, the date of absence, and the reason for the absence. The parent or guardian has three calendar days from the date of absence to submit the excuse through email. Absences greater than 3 consecutive days due to illness require a doctor or medical excuse.

**Bereavement:** It is understandable that some students may require more time than others to heal from the loss of a family member or friend. If families feel as though more than 3 days are necessary for leave, they must contact their homeroom teacher to address the additional time needed and create a plan for makeup work.

**Technology:** Learning Coaches must submit a Tech Ticket number for technology issues related to Stride K12/Highpoint Systems and Technology concerns resulting in an absence. (Call 1-866-K12CARE). Other technology concerns may be excused pending Administrative approval.

**Unexcused Absences:** An unexcused absence is an absence not recognized by state law or Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan. Unexcused absences may result in loss of credit for assignments missed.

Examples of Unexcused Absences:

- Unapproved travel or vacation time
- Birthday or other parties
- Oversleeping

- Illness more than 3 days without a doctor’s note
- Technology issues not reported

**No Internet Access or Power Outage:** Students who are unable to log into school or have a power outage must have an alternative plan to go to a public library/public location with computer access to do their schoolwork. If the student does not have a back-up plan and cannot go to the library, the student must notify his or her teacher to legitimize the reason for the absence.

**Truancy:** a student will be considered truant after ten (10) days (70 Hours) of unexcused absences or lack of engagement. The school employs several steps in dealing with non-attending/disengaged students, including:

- Calling the family and sending an email to families within 1-3 days of no attendance;
- Following up with warning emails and phone calls to families between 3-5 Days;
- Following up with phone calls and another warning letter to families at 10 days of no attendance;
- Mailing certified letters to families at 15 missing days of attendance, requesting school attendance meeting or conference call with parents and signing of Back on Track Plan;
- Informing the family via email that the student is considered withdrawn when any or all of these are met:
  - Missing 20 days of accrued attendance (excused, unexcused, LC only logged)
  - Missing 15% or more of required hours
  - Failure to respond to efforts to re-engage
  - Failure to successfully complete the Back on Track Plan
- When a family does not respond, given all of the above-mentioned steps, it implies withdrawal.

**Please Note:** Due to the state’s requirement to obtain specific “hours” of attendance, Highpoint will be following up with families who fall behind in accrued academic hours based on the timelines above. In addition, Highpoint Administrators reserve the right to remove logged attendance hours that cannot be supported by demonstrating course work, Class Connect attendance, or other criteria as indicated above. To avoid this, Learning Coaches should ensure communication regarding absences and days spent on all “offline” materials with no online work.

**Makeup Work:** Remember that regardless of the absence reason, students are expected to make up work in the OLS/LMS.

**Habitual Truancy:** A truant is defined as a student who is willfully absent from school without the knowledge and consent of the parent and school, or the student is absent from school when there is an attempt to evade the Michigan Compulsory Attendance Law. A “habitual truant” is defined as a student who is truant three times during any semester. A truant absence is considered an unexcused absence.

**Excessive Absences:** Excessive absences adversely affect a student’s academic performance and relationship with the school. Students who amass excessive absences or have long periods of a lack of engagement will fall under the truancy policy and may be withdrawn from HVAM. Anytime a student has missed three (3) consecutive days due to an illness they will be required to submit a doctor’s note.

**Pregnancy:** Pregnant students are expected to attend classes daily as assigned however they are encouraged to reach out to our Title IX Coordinator to ensure any needed plans are put in place to ensure student success. A team meeting will be planned prior to the student’s due date to prepare a return plan to transition the student back to classes within an acceptable amount of time with attention being paid to the unique needs of student mothers.

**Educational Leave:** Pupils may be excused for educational trips not sponsored by the school according to the Michigan School Code. Please understand that it shall be the family's responsibility to contact the teacher(s) to determine what obligations must be met as a result of this proposed absence. Further understand that:

- No more than ten (10) days of absence will result.
- No absence will occur in the last ten (10) days of the school year.
- Experiences such as "long weekends" and "vacations" will not justify any request
- Request must be submitted and approved 24 hours prior to the trip.
- Requests will not be approved for time off during the state testing window.

### **Out of State/Country Travel:**

Virtual learning affords families opportunities for alternative learning environments including travel outside of Michigan and the United States. However, please note the following limitations:

- All attendance rules apply unless you have requested an Educational Leave approval from your grade-level Principal. (Outlined above)
- Lack of internet access does not constitute an excused absence.
- Curriculum, equipment and supplemental materials cannot be shipped out of country and may only be shipped out of state with Administrative approval.
- Students are expected to attend all required, in-person state testing events.
- Contracted therapists serving our students with disabilities are typically not able to provide services to students located in states other than MI, even if travel is temporary. Please contact your Special Education teacher immediately if you have plans to travel out of state or country.
- Students experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity should reach out to HVAM's Homeless Liaison.
- As a public school funded by Michigan state aide, students traveling outside of Michigan for greater than 3 months may be subject to withdraw.

### **Attendance FAQs**

**Q:** Why should I log attendance?

**A:** Learning Coaches of students in grades TK-5 should log attendance for PE and health, as well as any supplemental hours outside of live classes and coursework.

**Q:** When can I log attendance and where?

**A:** Learning Coaches are able to log attendance beginning with the first day of school until the last day of school. Attendance is logged on the attendance screen in the Learning Coach account.

**Q:** Do I log attendance for the actual time the lesson took or just the default time that comes up on the OLS?

**A:** You must log the actual amount of time it took for the student to complete the lesson(s) each day. If you consistently observe your student completing lessons before he or she accumulates the required amount of time, you may benefit from setting a time limit to each subject, rather than just expecting one lesson per day.

**Q:** How many hours should my child log if he or she enrolled after the start of school?

**A:** Hours are prorated based on a student's start date. Students who start after the first day of school should follow the daily or weekly attendance guidelines outlined in the Instructional Time section of this handbook. Your teacher will also provide you with a prorated schedule. Students need an average of 7 hours daily in order to meet the state requirement of 1098 hours/180 days.

**Q:** What are supplemental hours?

**A:** The system logs attendance when a student attends Class Connect sessions or completes lessons in the online school. Additional offline school time (studying, spelling practice reading time, etc.) is considered supplemental and can be logged on the attendance screen in the Learning Coach account.

**Q:** How can I report an absence?

**A:** You can email the office: [hvamattendance@highpointva.org](mailto:hvamattendance@highpointva.org) . DO NOT enter any time in attendance in the Learning Coach account.

## Student Support Services

The mission of the Highpoint Virtual Academy Family Academic Support Team is to graduate young men and women of character by providing encouragement, engagement, and accountability to foster family success in a supportive community. Through a holistic process, students and learning coaches will get layers of support as needed.

### Single Point of Contact

Each student is assigned a homeroom teacher, or homeroom advisor, and that person is the contact for onboarding, navigation support, school policy questions, address/phone changes, and general support. High school students should reach out to their counselors for schedule changes or credit questions.

### Tier 1- Support provided by teachers and advisor

At this level, all students will receive basic navigation and onboarding support. General questions are answered at this level, and the teachers and advisors are monitoring progress, grades, and attendance. Advisors are making regular calls to the students/learning coaches to ensure the students are completing daily work and that the attendance is being logged.

### Tier 2- Support Provided by Advisor or Homeroom Teacher

The student and learning coach are struggling to keep up with class requirements and attendance. This level is seamless and happens during enduring connection calls made to learning coaches.

This is an intervention tool designed to ensure that students and learning coaches have mastered the following basic skills:

- Navigation of online school platform
- Accessing lessons/completing lessons
- Turning in assignments
- Creating a schedule
- Creating goals
- Attendance

### Tier 3- Support Provided by Advisor, Administrator, and Teacher through a Back on Track Plan

This plan is meant to ensure all methods for helping to re-engage the student in school have been tried. The administrator may determine whether or not Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan is in the student's best academic interest. The teacher may brainstorm further ways in which to re-engage the student.

**Academic Probation:** This plan is meant to re-engage the student with specific engagement goals, or students missing more than 15% of required school hours, via a back on track plan. The advisor, teacher(s), and administration work with the learning coach and student to create this plan.

#### Process:

- Student is placed on a 2-week re-engagement program that consists of:
  - Individual meeting to develop the plan
  - Weekly check in with the advisor or teacher to discuss plan progress
- If the student successfully complies with the probation plan for at least two weeks, the student may graduate off the plan.
- If the student does not comply with the plan, the student may be subject to withdrawal.

## State of Michigan Required Testing

Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan, a Michigan public school, must follow the rules set by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) in observance of state law. According to MDE, all students in grades 3-11 are **required** to participate in state testing. Being a part of Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan means that some travel will be required for testing. Travel includes going to and from testing locations. Families should plan on alternate forms of travel if they do not own a car: bus, carpool, relative, etc. The Spring of 2025 Schedule is below. Dates are subject to change based on location and individual student needs.

## Standardized Testing Attendance

Testing will be conducted at a variety of sites around the state. Efforts will be made to locate a testing site within an hour of your home. In certain cases it may be necessary to travel longer than an hour. These tests are given over a multi-day period depending on a student’s grade level. Attendance is mandatory for Highpoint Virtual Academy students. Students unable to attend state testing due to medical concerns must provide a doctor’s note.

Specific testing dates and locations will be published no later than two weeks prior to the testing window. The school cannot guarantee that the student’s assigned teacher will be the test proctor.

## Michigan Department of Education Assessment Schedule:

Spring 2025 Testing Schedule for Summative Assessments																	
Assessment	Week of																
	2/3-2/7	2/10-2/14	2/17-2/21	2/24-2/28	3/3-3/7	3/10-3/14	3/17-3/21	3/24-3/28	3/31-4/4	4/7-4/11	4/14-4/18	4/21-4/25	4/28-5/2	5/5-5/9	5/12-5/16	5/19-5/23	
M-STEP Online										6 weeks							
M-STEP Paper/Pencil										4 weeks							
MI-Access Alternate Assessments										7 weeks							
College Entrance: SAT w/Essay										3 weeks							
Work Skills: ACT WorkKeys																	
ACT WorkKeys Accommodated Testing Windows																	
PSAT 8/9 (Grade 8)																	
PSAT 8/9 (Grade 9)																	
PSAT 10 (Grade 10)																	
WIDA ACCESS and WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs	7 weeks																

## Standardized Testing Score Reporting

Student Test Scores are sent directly to Highpoint Virtual Academy office. Scores will be distributed upon receipt to the parent/legal guardian on record via US Mail.

## Academic Programs

### Attendance-Only Courses: K5

#### Physical Education:

Michigan's Department of Education expects students in grades K-8 to receive at least 2.5 hours per week of physical exercise. It is up to the Learning Coach and student to be sure that the student gets **at least 30 minutes of activity each school day**. No online curriculum will be available for students in grades K-5; however the Physical Education teacher will provide instruction and curriculum materials. Students in grades 6-8 will have a Physical Education course and teacher similar to other LMS courses.

#### Health:

Michigan's Department of Education requires students to receive 50 hours of health education at each grade. These hours will be provided through a combination of the learning coach and K-8 PE/Health teacher. Students in grades K-8 do not have a course but will be awarded a grade based on PE/Health teacher requirements.

**Approximately 1.5 hours weekly will meet Health requirements.**

At the beginning of the school year, the PE/Health teacher will send a list of objectives/strands that he or she will be working on this year with students. The remaining strands will be the responsibility of the learning coach.

We do understand that the Human Growth and Development topic is sensitive. If this topic will be covered in a ClassConnect session, parents/guardians will receive an opt in letter with an explanation of material covered. It will be the choice of the parents/guardians to choose for their child to participate in that particular ClassConnect session. Only those families opting in will be invited to this sensitive topic.

[Link to K8 MDE Health Content Expectations](#)

If you have any questions please contact your child's PE/Health teacher.

#### Technology:

ClassConnects that are attended for a specific subject (ELA, Math, etc) should have time logged under that specific course's attendance spot. "Extra" ClassConnects such as assemblies, homerooms, orientation, etc. can be logged under "Technology". Any time you are working with your student on items like uploading photos, creating a Power Point, "how to use the computer", etc. can be logged under Technology as well. **There is no hourly requirement for Technology Hours**; however, your student should have some time logged throughout the year.

## **The Elementary Program (Grades K-5)**

### **Grades TK-2 Principal**

Timothy Jalkanen  
855-337-8243 X 7800  
[tjalkanen@highpointva.org](mailto:tjalkanen@highpointva.org)

### **Grades 3-5 Principal**

Beth Simon  
855-337-8243 X 7861  
[esimon@highpointva.org](mailto:esimon@highpointva.org)

Highpoint Virtual Academy elementary teachers will maintain contact with students via telephone conferences, Class Connect online lessons, face-to-face conferences, HVAM gatherings, and during standardized testing participation. Through these contacts the teacher will develop clear instructional learning goals for each student and monitor progress towards these goals throughout the school year.

As expected, students identified as “at-risk” will hold a higher priority of contact as determined by the teacher and the parent. Students with IEP’s will also require more interaction. The regular and special education teachers will work in cooperation to ensure increased interaction.

### **Individualized Reading Improvement Plans (Grades K-3):**

Michigan state law, HB 4822, requires that any child that is reading significantly below grade level be put on an Individual Reading Improvement Plan (IRIP). IRIPS are an opportunity for the Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan staff and parents/guardians to work together following an individualized reading plan developed to meet the specific needs of your child. This plan is developed based on the results of assessments along with your input and the input from your child’s teacher with the goal of being at grade level, in reading, by the end of third grade. An individual ClassConnect meeting will be held to review the IRIP. Attendance by a parent or guardian at this meeting is required.

### **Academic Advancement (Grades K-5):**

It is important to understand that the decision to advance a student to the next course or grade level is made jointly by the parent, teacher and principal. The decision focuses on what is in the best interest of the child. Academic achievement through content mastery is the cornerstone of Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan and the Stride K12 curriculum. Highpoint understands children do not learn at the same rate or in the same manner. The program offers families flexibility in scheduling and instructional strategies. Our program focuses on mastery of lesson objectives, encouraging families and students to spend the time needed daily and throughout the year to reach mastery of most lesson objectives.

### **K-5 Promotion and Retention:**

Throughout the school year, Michigan grade level standards will be measured for all students in grade K-5. At the end of each quarter, a snapshot will be created for each student that outlines actual course progress and expected progress for that point in the school year. Learning goals will also be defined from student- teacher interaction along with results from local assessments, work submissions, and Stride K12 Online School. The learning goals will be monitored for the entire school year. At the end of the 2nd and 4th quarter, a formal “report card” will be sent via email.

Percentage is calculated from the following: Expected Online School Progress 75% of Grade + Teacher Created Assignments/School Assessments 25% of Grade

- Less than 60% Expected Progress: NY (Not Yet Meeting Progress Goal)
- 60 – 79% Expected Progress: AP (Approaching Progress Goal)
- 80 – 100% Expected Progress: M (Meet Progress Goal)

Starting in Grade 4 and 5 grades will be assigned to students to begin to prepare them for the rigor of Middle School.

**Grading Scale:**

<b>A</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>93-100%</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>73-76%</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>90-92%</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>70-72%</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>87-89%</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>67-69%</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>83-86%</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>63-66%</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>80-82%</b>	<b>D-</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>60-62%</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>77-79%</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0-59%</b>

**Grade Appeals:**

Questions regarding all grades should be directed to the Homeroom Teacher initially to resolve questions. If unresolved, questions should be directed to the Principal for further investigation and final grade awarded. The Principal will adjust and reissue the report card or progress report if adjustments are made. Grade appeals must occur within six weeks of semester end.

**Grade Level Retention:**

After the Third Quarter, teachers will notify learning coaches whose students are at risk for grade level retention. A meeting will be arranged with the student, learning coach/parent, teacher, and administrator to make a team decision regarding retention based on current student information.

It is imperative that all students attend each scheduled “required” live ClassConnect session, individual teacher conferences, and participate in all assessments – either face-to-face and/or Live Class Connects. As their progress is monitored, students may be asked to attend supplemental tutoring sessions for additional instructional support. These are integral tools for gathering information about individual strengths and weaknesses and monitoring ongoing progress to ensure student success. These measures also help in determining mastery levels which will be reported on the student’s progress reports. Promotion or retention for the next grade level will be determined as the cumulative results of the student’s progress and achievement for the school year are analyzed at the end of the academic year. Our goal is not to make all children alike, but to foster individual strengths and help each child develop to his or her fullest potential. Please note, if your child is receiving special education services, the learning goals that have been created and recorded on the students IEP for him/her will supersede this list of grade level standards; however, assessment on grade level standards may still occur.

**Online School (OLS) Progress:**

The Stride K12 curriculum is outstanding and helps students master state standards. Therefore, it is always recommended that students master all core lessons in the Online School. The goal will be 100% progress unless otherwise determined by the teacher.

Teachers will provide a list of assignments from the Online School that should be submitted directly to the teacher. This work will allow the teacher to give detailed feedback. It is important that students master and retain their work and not just work through assignments. If at any time it becomes clear that a student has not mastered work that is marked complete, the lessons may need to be completed again. In addition, students should have their own student account and should not have access to teacher guides or answer keys.



Communication with the student's teachers is another key to our unique partnership. Students who ask for assistance from their teachers have shown greater success in this type of virtual model. To assure that students are meeting mastery, each student and parent must be available to attend conferences set up by the teacher, as well as weekly homeroom meetings, and Classroom Connect sessions. Students need to attend and to interact with their teachers and other students during these sessions. Experience has taught us that students who become actively engaged with their teachers and other students achieve at a higher level.

### **Teacher Assigned Projects and Assignments:**

Teachers will assign projects and assignments directly into the curriculum within the Online School. The addition of these assignments may cause the curriculum lesson numbers to appear incorrect. This is a part of the system and is not an error. These projects are meant to engage students and bring in key state standards not addressed through the Online School curriculum. These projects and assignments are to be submitted directly to the teacher and will be graded. The grades will be reflected in the student's report cards.

## **The Middle and High School Program (Grades 6-12)**

### **6-8 Principal**

Stacy Little

855-337-8243 X 7839

[slittle@highpointva.org](mailto:slittle@highpointva.org)

### **9-12 Principal**

Laura Wiechertjes

855-337-8243 X 7828

[lwiechertjes@highpointva.org](mailto:lwiechertjes@highpointva.org)

In grades 6-12 the focus begins to shift towards more independent learning for students.

- Students are expected to take on more accountability and responsibility for their learning.
- Student and teacher interaction increase with teachers continuing to provide instruction directly.
- Students are expected to develop more independent study skills and to submit more assignments to be evaluated or graded to their teachers.

Stride K12 utilizes their Learning Management System (LMS) to provide the online school campus and courses. The school campus site features school announcements, messages from the administration, access to important documents, club and organization information, guidance counseling resources, and courses- all combined into one interactive and easy to use interface. The student calendar, which shows assignments and due dates for all courses in one easy to use tool, helps students to stay on focus in every course. Courses provide dedicated tools, like a teacher syllabus and announcements, a Raise Your Hand area to ask course-related questions for their teachers, easy to use online assessments, and an electronic drop-box for assignment submission. These all work together to provide a rich course experience for students.

Courses are delivered by semester. Year-long courses are comprised of two semesters. Courses consist of multiple units, lessons, and activities. Teachers may deliver lectures live or online, but most of the time students work through expertly designed lessons online which allows students to follow their own personal daily schedules. They serve to instruct, to provide practice and exploration and to assess student learning daily, based on a minimum pace and a schedule that fits each student. Teachers post announcements and indicate the lessons, activities and assessments to be completed each week on the course calendar. All work assigned for a single week must be received on the dates indicated, but may be accepted up until midnight of the Sunday of that week without penalty.

Highpoint Virtual Academy's Middle and High School program is a blend of synchronous and asynchronous work – students work according to their own individual daily schedules. Teachers provide asynchronous and synchronous – live support. Course activities may include:

- Reading online text and transcripts;
- Viewing moving and static images and streaming video;
- Listening to audio recordings and pronunciations;
- Linear and interactive animations and simulations;
- Hands-on and virtual activities;
- Threaded discussions with teachers and fellow students in a section, cohort or group;
- Teacher announcements;
- Online self-check exercises; or
- Teacher-created instructional materials

Student learning will continue to benefit from close relationships among parents, students, advisors, teachers and other support personnel. For students to achieve mastery of high school level courses, the instructional component will rely heavily upon skilled subject-specific teachers who will serve as coaches and guides through a clearly defined, high-quality curriculum. Learning coaches will still be crucial as mentors and coaches; however, students' academic success in virtual high school will depend upon the student's level of engagement with the curriculum and interactions with their teachers.

#### **Licensed Teachers:**

Every student has an expert teacher for each course. Teachers are state-certified in the subject area they teach, and may be assisted by partner teachers who are experts in a particular curriculum area. Teachers set due dates for assignments, and then grade, provide feedback, and return assignments to students. Teachers answer student questions via email and phone, and hold weekly live content sessions during which students and parents can attend for more clarity on difficult topics. Teachers provide one-on-one and small-group instruction to students who are experiencing difficulty with certain topics. Teachers communicate directly with students and Learning Coaches regarding the student's progress and missing/late assignments. Special Education teachers ensure that students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) receive the accommodations and adaptations required to ensure their success and compliance with their IEP.

#### **Middle/High School Grading Policies:**

Graded activities will be assigned points. A student's final grade will reflect the actual points earned, compared to the total points possible. Teachers will use these points to assign letter grades, according to their grading policies. Students and learning coaches can access the current grades for all courses by viewing their accounts in the LMS or the My Info area, at any time during the semester.

#### Graded activities may include:

- Online or paper-based worksheets and practice sets;
- Quizzes;
- Exams (e.g. Unit, Semester, Final);
- Threaded-discussions;
- Essays, research papers, and other writing assignments;
- Presentations

Assignments will be teacher-graded or computer-graded, depending on the assignment. During the semester students can view their grades in the course Gradebook. Your teachers, administrators and parents also have access to your grade information.

Students are responsible for their own work on unit tests and final exams. Students are not allowed to use notes, quizzes, or textbooks on unit tests and final exams, unless indicated in an IEP or by individual content teacher. Students are not allowed to share work with other students on unit tests or final exams. Unless otherwise noted, tests and quizzes are not “open-book” assignments. If a student does not complete his own work or shares his work with others on unit tests and/or final exams, he/she will not receive credit for the work. He/she will also face the risk of suspension or expulsion.

Students must cite sources in all assignments, tests and exams. Students will not receive credit for work that does not appropriately cite sources. If a student uses information from a source, but does not cite the source, the student will receive a zero for that assignment and may be subject to additional discipline as outlined in the Code of Conduct below.

### **Late Work Policy:**

- Graded assignments must be completed and submitted no later than midnight on the due date. Teachers will post late work policies in their courses. They may choose to assign a penalty for late work of up to 20%.
- A zero will be entered the Monday after an assignment is due.
- Students will be able to submit late assignments after a zero is assigned; however, teachers may choose to give an alternative assignment or award partial points.
- For computer-scored quizzes that are late, the student may need to contact the teacher before they will be allowed to take the quiz.

Teachers are willing to discuss the late submission of work past the above-listed deadlines. Please contact teachers directly as soon as possible to find out if this is an option. Teachers will grant due date extensions on assignments under some circumstances. You should never assume that teachers will automatically grant these requests; however, due date extensions must be requested **before** the due date of the assignment and on a school day. Requests received on or past the due date, or on a non-school day will most likely not be granted.

### **Source Citation:**

Many courses require written work in which you will need to cite sources. Any direct quotations from your textbook can simply be cited as (author, page number). Any quotations from outside sources require full citations, including author, title, publisher, date of publication, and page number. If you are citing information found on a website, provide the complete web page or site title, URL, author (if known), page number (if applicable), and publication date of the site (if available).

### **Academic Dishonesty Policy/Plagiarism:**

Academic integrity is highly valued at Highpoint Virtual Academy. Incidents involving plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses that warrant immediate administrative attention. Students are required to submit original work. They are obligated to cite the sources of all references they use. See also Student Rights and Responsibilities Behavior Guidelines for additional information regarding this policy.

### **Non-citation infraction:**

- 1st incident = grade of zero on assignment
- 2nd incident = grade of zero on assignment and administrative review.

### **Citation infraction**

- 1st incident = counseling on correct use of citations

- 2nd incident = grade of zero on assignment
- 3rd incident = grade of zero on assignment and administrative review

Note: Turnitin.com may be used per teacher request to ensure plagiarism does not occur within assignments.

### Grading Scale:

<b>A</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>93-100%</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>73-76%</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>90-92%</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>70-72%</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>87-89%</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>67-69%</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>83-86%</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>63-66%</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>80-82%</b>	<b>D-</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>60-62%</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>77-79%</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0-59%</b>

### Progress Updates/Report Cards:

Students in grades 6-12 will receive progress updates via email at the end of each quarter. Print report cards will be sent upon request. High School semester grades (Grades 9-12) will be reported on the student's official transcript.

### Grade Appeals:

Questions regarding all grades should be directed to the Teacher of Record for the course initially to resolve questions. If unresolved, questions should be directed to the Principal for further investigation and final grade awarded. The final grade, if changed, will be adjusted on the student transcript by the School Counselor. The Principal will adjust and reissue the report card/transcript if adjustments are made. Grade appeals must be done within 6 weeks of the end of term.

### Middle School Students and High School Credit:

Middle school students may be approved to take high school courses for credit. Only core and board-approved courses will be considered for credit (no electives). A review of current grades and pre-requisites will be conducted and an assessment may be given to determine appropriateness of placement.

### Educational Development Plan (EDP)

Educational Development Plans (EDPs) are living documents developed by all students in grades 7-12 to identify career goals and related action plans in alignment with their changing interest and abilities. EDPs help students think about long-term education and career plans before entering high school. By going through this process, students learn more about themselves, consider different options for their future, and develop a more specific path for preparing for their career choice. HVAM may use a third-party site (Example: Xello) to meet this requirement.

### Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and EDPs

Although both the IEP and EDP promote positive outcomes after high school, they are two different documents with different purposes. EDPs do not replace IEPs. IEPs are created for students meeting special education eligibility under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Per the IDEA, during transition planning, educators gather information about a student's interests and strengths through age-appropriate assessments and work with the student to develop measurable postsecondary (after high school) goals related to education, training, employment, and, when appropriate, independent living skills. EDPs help students identify career paths and the education needed to reach career goals. Sometimes in developing the IEP, information from the EDP may be used to assist in transition planning.

## High School-Specific Guidelines

### High School Graduation Requirements

Highpoint Virtual Academy is accredited by the State of Michigan and by Cognia. As a member of these associations the school must meet the requirements of graduation set up by these organizations, the Michigan State Board of Education, the Michigan State Department of Education, the laws of the state of Michigan and the Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan Board of Trustees.

If a graduating student wishes to participate in the graduation ceremony, course work must be completed by the Wednesday prior to graduation. No exceptions will be made. In addition, any student eligible for graduation must have met the following requirements:

- Completion of MME testing
- Passing of all MMC required classes and at least 22 credits

### Enrollment Requirements

Highpoint Virtual Academy will follow the MMC requirements, outlined in the Student Handbook, and as such may be amended from time to time. In order to be eligible for graduation from Highpoint Virtual Academy, a student must have earned a minimum of 25% of his/her high school credits required for graduation from or complete a minimum of one (1) full school year (at any time during the student's education or a combination of time to equal one (1) full school year) as full-time students of Highpoint Virtual Academy. Students may also meet this requirement by attending another Cognia Accredited Institution for a minimum of one year.

Exceptions may be approved by the Head of School. Under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, schools are to remove barriers to enrollment for homeless students. Therefore, homeless students are exempted from the minimum 25% of high school credits earned and a minimum of one full school year at HVAM portions of this policy.

In accordance with Michigan Revised School Code 380.1278a and b and Highpoint Virtual Academy academic standards, all students must complete all course requirements.

### Credits and Grade Level Indication:

All students will be placed in grade levels according to the credit scale below:

- 0-4.99 Credits = 9<sup>th</sup> Grade
- 5-9.99 Credits = 10<sup>th</sup> Grade
- 10 – 14.99 Credits = 11<sup>th</sup> Grade
- 15-22 Credits = 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

### Course Requirements: 22 Credits Total

- 4 Credits – Math
- 4 Credits – English
- 3 Credits – Social Studies/History to include 0.5 Credits Civics/0.5 Credits Economics
- 3 Credits – Science
- 2 Credits – World Language
- 1 Credit Fine Art
- 4.0 Credits – Electives
- 0.5 Credits – Physical Education
- 0.5 Credits - Health

### Determining Class Rank and Honor Roll:

For students in grades 9-12, class rank is determined by rank ordering the cumulative grade point average of all students within a grade level. Students earning a semester grade point average of 3.25 or higher will be eligible for the Honor Roll.

The following GPA values will be assigned to semester grades in each course:

<b>A</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>B-</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>D+</b>	<b>1.3</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>D-</b>	<b>0.7</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>C-</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>0.0</b>

### Graduation Honors:

During the graduation ceremony seniors will be recognized in the following manner: Grade Point Average (rounded to the nearest hundredth.)

- Honors cord awarded to students with a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher
- Medals awarded to Valedictorian and Salutatorian

### Valedictorian/Salutatorian:

Valedictorian: the student or students in the graduating class that has the highest cumulative GPA.

Salutatorian: the student or students in the graduating class that has the second highest cumulative GPA.

In order for a student to qualify for Valedictorian/Salutatorian they must meet the following criteria:

- Have the highest/second highest GPA
- Complete the final year (two semesters) of school at HVAM.

### Weighted Grade Policy

“Weighting” a grade adds to the grade point value earned in certain courses. Grades earned in weighted classes will earn an extra grade point. Therefore, an “A” in a weighted class will yield 5 grade points, a “B” will yield 4 grade points, and a “C” will yield 3 grade, points, etc.

Advanced Placement (AP) courses and dual credit courses which are transferable to 4-year colleges or universities and are either taught at the high school or university and are part of a sequence which is not available/attainable within the home high school, will be weighted.

For students transferring into the District, grades from AP, International Baccalaureate (IB) and dual credit classes will be weighted per the Highpoint GPA scale regardless of previous district GPA points.

### Conversion of Credits:

HVAM understands that different schools use different units of measurement for calculating their credits. If a student comes to HVAM and does not have listed the standard 0.5 credit per class per semester the following actions will be taken by the counselors:

- The former school will be contacted to verify how their credits are calculated;
- Based on the conversation, the counselor will enter credits on the transcript accordingly; and
- If it is determined that the student earned less than 0.5 credit because the class was not mastered, the credit will be placed under the “general elective” category and the student will need to take the class again.

### **Credits from Nonpublic Schools (Including Homeschool)**

In recognizing its responsibility to uphold the minimum educational standards of the State of Michigan, the Board of Directors establishes the following policy and criteria regarding the acceptance of credits from nonpublic schools whether they are State-approved, non-approved, or home schools.

For credit or coursework to be accepted for courses taken in such schools, assurance of compliance with minimum requirements established by the State must be provided.

Recognition of credits or coursework shall be granted when the proper assurance and the student's transcript has been received. The Academy reserves the right to assess such transfer students to determine proper placement and to be assured the student can demonstrate the learnings which are prerequisite to a placement.

Although credits from nonpublic schools may be granted and placed on a student's transcript, no grades will be entered on the transcript or considered for class ranking. Only grades awarded for courses taken at the Academy or at a school approved by a State education agency shall be considered in class ranking and for entering on the transcript.

### **Credit Recovery:**

Credit Recovery classes will be assigned on a case-by-case basis and are typically utilized when a student has previously taken and failed a course or are behind in on-time graduation credit status. Enrollment in a credit recovery class will only occur once the counselor has explained the class format to the student. Both the parent and guardian must sign a form understanding the pace and intent of the Credit Recovery Course. A student will receive the letter grade earned for the class but the transcript will reflect that the grade was earned through a credit recovery class.

### **Graduating Early/Number of Courses:**

Students at HVAM take 6 courses each semester. However, HVAM recognizes that there are times when taking more than 6 courses during a given semester/school year will allow a student to graduate early or on time. If such an incident occurs, it is at the discretion of the counselor to determine if the student is able to handle more than 6 classes at a time. Only students in grades 11 and 12 will be considered for more than 6 classes each semester (maximum of 8). Please note: if a student wishes to graduate early, he or she will need to apply for early graduation in writing and be approved by the counseling department and administration.

### **Report Cards and Transcripts:**

Report cards are emailed out to students at the end of semesters.

Transcripts are updated at the end of each semester to reflect credits earned. There are two types of transcripts that a student can request: unofficial transcripts and official transcripts. Unofficial transcripts can be requested of the students' counselor or administrator. The counselor will send the transcript to the student or learning coach requesting the transcript. Official transcripts are typically requested by a students' new school.

### **Schedule Change Deadline:**

Changes to a student's schedule will only be considered during the first two weeks of the semester or within two weeks of a student's start date. Once the first two weeks have passed, no schedule changes will be considered. A request for a schedule change does not guarantee that a change will be made. Schedule changes must be in alignment with the student's EDP and approved by the counselor.

### **Retaking Courses:**

Students failing a course may retake the same course and replace the letter grade and GPA points. Consideration should be made with the counselor to determine overall course numbers and graduation plans/timelines.

### **Incompletes:**

A mark of incomplete indicates that the required work for the course has not been completed. Any incomplete for a first semester grade shall be made up no later than two weeks into the second semester. Any incomplete for a second semester grade shall be made up no later than one week after school is dismissed for summer break. Failure to do so will may result in an automatic F and loss of one semester of credit for that class.

### **Honors Courses:**

Students looking to take more rigorous classes at HVAM are encouraged to take honors classes. Honors Courses require counselor and/or teacher approval. Once enrolled in an honors class, a student must complete the required work with at least an 80%. If a student does not achieve at least 80% on their semester report card, they may not be placed into an honors class for the next semester.

### **Foreign Languages:**

It is strongly recommended that students show strong English Language Arts success at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level to be approved for foreign language placement in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. (A/B grade marks or administrative approval.)

### **Testing Out:**

Any high school student who wishes to test-out of a core graduation required course may do so by taking the School Final Exam. The student must receive a grade of at least C+ (77%) or by demonstrating mastery of the subject matter as determined by the assessment used in lieu of a final examination. Credit will be awarded as Pass/Fail and will not impact overall GPA. Students who opt to Test Out shall receive a syllabus for the course they are testing out and State Content Expectation Standards, if available. This is done in accordance to the Michigan Merit Curriculum law 380.1278(a)(4)(c) and 380.1279(b) of the Revised School code.

### **Personal Curriculum:**

According to Section 380.1278 of the Revised School code, general education students have a right to a personal curriculum if doing so will allow them to graduate high school in a timely manner with a diploma. The PC is a process to modify specific credit requirements and/or content expectations based on the individual learning needs of a student. It is designed to serve students who want to accelerate or go beyond the MMC requirements and students who need to individualize learning requirements to meet the MMC requirements. A personal curriculum can be implemented in the following areas:

- Modify the Algebra II content
- Go beyond the academic credit requirements by adding more math, science, English Language Arts, or world language credits in place of Health, PE, VFPA, or Social Studies.
- Modify credit requirements for a student who transfers from out of state or from a nonpublic school in the 11th or 12th grade and is unable to meet the MMC requirements.

If a student is interested in a personal curriculum, the follows steps will be followed:

- Parent, student, or school personnel requests a PC by contacting their counselor
- Request is reviewed to determine if a PC is needed
- PC team meets, including student, parent, counselor, and teacher of related subject area that will be modified
- An agreement is written and signed by the PC team as well as the school principal or head of school
- PC is implemented
- Progress is monitored by the school and the PC counselor

Upon completion of the PC and all other high school classes, the student is awarded a high school diploma.



### **Certificate of Completion:**

A Certificate of Completion recognizes the accomplishments of students who have completed a district- prescribed course of study outside of the Michigan Merit Curriculum. This certificate recognizes the achievement of transition goals outlined in the student's IEP that promote post-secondary independence to the degree that meets the individual student's capabilities. A Certificate of Completion is an educational alternative to the diploma-bound course of study at HVAM, emphasizing functional academics, life management, social and behavioral skills development, and vocational/employment training for students to become happy, healthy and productive adults. The certificate is not the same as a high school diploma and may hinder students from their post high school intentions. Parents and Guardians with questions should reach out to their student's Special Education teacher.

### **National Honor Society:**

The Highpoint National Honor Society will offer membership to eligible students between grades 9-11 after the end of the first semester. To be eligible for membership students must meet the following requirements:

- Candidates eligible for selection must be in the second semester of ninth grade or members of the tenth or eleventh grade class.
- To be eligible for selection, the candidate must have been enrolled for a period equivalent to one semester at Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan.
- Candidates eligible for selection shall have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.33 on a 4.0 scale.
- Upon meeting the grade level, enrollment, and GPA standards, candidates shall then be considered based on their service, leadership, character, and citizenship.

### **Dual Enrollment:**

HVAM allows students to take Dual Enrollment courses but must meet the following guidelines:

- Students/LC's must consult with their counselors first to determine eligibility for dual enrollment.

### **Eligibility Requirements:**

- Have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.5.
- Must have taken at least one of the state tests (PSAT, ACT, SAT).
- Must be passing current courses at the time of the application
- Must take all testing required by HVAM
- Students must be enrolled in at least 1 Highpoint Course to be considered an HVAM student.

### **Additional Guidelines:**

The number of postsecondary dual enrollment courses that a pupil may take is limited to not more than 10 courses overall.

- The postsecondary courses must be academic in nature or applicable to career preparation.
- The postsecondary course must apply toward the satisfaction of degree requirements and may not be in the subject areas of physical education, theology, divinity or religious education. Hobby craft and recreational courses are not eligible under legislation.
- An eligible postsecondary course must not be offered by the school district.

School counselor and administration reserve the right to deny or allow student's participation in dual enrollment. Students/Learning Coaches/ and school administration will all sign a dual enrollment contract/document agreeing to the above items. The school has a set amount of funds set aside for dual enrollment tuition. If there is a balance left after the school has sent the prorated amount, the student/family is responsible for the outstanding fee. If a student drops out of DE course(s) after the college's official dropout date, he/she is responsible for refunding the amount used for tuition back to HVAM. The student must follow ALL of the college's and HVAM's important academic dates.

Committing plagiarism or any other academic infraction is automatic grounds for withdrawal from dual enrollment and will make student ineligible for dual enrollment while actively enrolled at Highpoint.

### Early Middle College:

The Highpoint Early Middle College program offers students the opportunity to earn an Associate's Degree at NO cost. Students who are enrolling must have a 2.50 GPA, are on track for graduation, and have less than 10 absences per school year. Students in this program will take high school and college courses during their junior and senior year. Students will then attend college courses only for a 13th year and earn their high school diploma and an Associate's degree simultaneously.

Students who are interested in these courses should be looking into them as early as 8th and 9<sup>th</sup> grades so that they will be prepared when the time comes for enrollment. The counselor or principal will discuss programs with students.

### Health Class

High School students are required to take a health class to meet the requirements of the Michigan Merit Curriculum and graduate. Learning Coaches may review the content of the Health Course at any time upon request. Students may elect to "opt out" of units regarding sexual health by contacting the teacher of the course. An alternative assignment or unit of study may be assigned.

### Counseling Opportunities

Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan will provide all students with a developmentally appropriate comprehensive school counseling program. The school counseling program guides students through a systematic approach to developing the academic, personal, social and career skills of each student. Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan will use a combination of curriculum, web-based tools, and strategies that have demonstrated success. The school counseling program is a key piece of the school's mission to make all students "college and career ready" as they prepare for the complex demands of the 21st century.

Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan will offer the following components to support our comprehensive school counseling program:

- Career assessment, exploration, and skills development;
- Individual and group counseling services for all students on personal/social issues;
- Study skills as determined by needs assessment;
- Developmental guidance curriculum to promote the academic success and personal growth of every student;
- Parent outreach, education and support services, facilitating community resources and referral programs;
- Individualized academic advisement and graduation planning, ensuring all students graduate on time with the most rigorous course selection;
- College and postsecondary education counseling and web tools that guide students through the preparation, selection, application, and admissions processes.

### Work Permits

- Work Permits may be obtained by reaching out to student's counselor or administrator and must be returned to Highpoint for appropriate signatures and verification by the Head of School. Work permits will be issued based on the following State of Michigan Guidelines:
- **CA-7 MICHIGAN WORK PERMIT AND AGE CERTIFICATE**
- The *Minimum Age for Employment is 14 years* except that a minor 11 years of age or older may be employed as a youth athletic program referee or umpire for an age bracket younger than his/her own age or as a golf or

bridge caddy; 13 years of age or older may be employed to perform services which entail setting traps for formal or informal trap, skeet and sporting clays shooting events or in some farming occupations described in section 4(3) of the Youth Employment Standards Act 90 of 1978. *Adult supervision is required, at all times.*

- *Who Needs a CA-7 Yellow Work Permit?* A 16- or 17-year-old minor attending any type of schooling (*including but not limited to home school – cyber school – online school – virtual school*) or not attending school or is an out of state resident and not specifically exempt from the Youth Employment Standards Act (P.A. 90 of 1978) sections 409.116; 409.117; 409.118; 409.119. This completed (all sections I, II, III) yellow CA-7 work permit allows a minor to be employed, only by the employer at the location, listed in Section II; therefore, *minor shall not begin* employment in an occupation regulated by this act until the person proposing to employ the minor procures and keeps on file at the place of employment a completed original yellow CA-7 which is valid *until minor turns 18 or graduates*, as long as the minor works for the same employer.
- *Who Issues the Work Permit?* A State of Michigan issuing officer is the chief administrator of a school district, intermediate school district, public school academy, or nonpublic school, or a person authorized by that chief administrator in writing to act on his/her behalf.
- *Employment of Minors:* A minor under 18 years of age shall not be employed in, about, or in connection with an occupation that is hazardous or injurious to minor’s health or personal well-being or which is contrary to standards established by state and federal acts, (i.e., construction, slicers, motor vehicle operation, power-driven machinery).

## Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan Student Code of Conduct

The goal of Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan is to provide the best possible educational experience for each student. The instructional program, partnership of parents and teachers, clubs, outings, and competitions help to increase student success. Coupled with the advantages of these educational opportunities is the need for students to assume personal responsibility for their behavior.

Students share with the school community responsibility for developing Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan into a school that exemplifies high standards and excellence. Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan’s Code of Student Conduct is based upon this responsibility. Understanding the information that follows is an essential responsibility of each student.

### The Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan Student Code of Conduct shall apply:

- During the Academy Educational Program and process including, but not limited to the OLS, Class Connects, email, telephone, in-person or virtual conferences with teachers, administrators or any Academy staff and students;
- On any premises or equipment owned, leased or used by the Academy;
- In a motor vehicle owned or leased by the Academy or being used for a school- related purpose;
- At a school-related event, activity or function;
- Traveling by any means to or from school or a school-related event, activity, or function;
- In any location, where the conduct has a sufficient connection to or with the Academy, Academy staff or students, or Academy property that it adversely and significantly affects, interferes with or endangers good order or the educational environment at school, or the proper functioning of the educational process; or where application to non-school locations is expressly stated.

## Student Infractions and Consequences

Disciplinary procedures shall be consistent with applicable requirements of the Michigan Code and IDEA. Student offenses dictate the severity of the consequence Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan will impose. In addition to the specific offenses set forth below, Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan has the right to discipline any student

who engages in conduct that threatens the health, safety, or welfare of others or disrupts the learning environment. The appropriate consequence will be determined at the sole discretion of Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan in accordance with the law. A student has the right to certain discipline procedures as outlined in the final section of this code.

### **The Following Levels of Discipline are Permitted in the Academy:**

#### **Level 1: Administrative Alternatives**

Listed below is a non-exclusive list of administrative alternatives to exclusion from school that may be considered, with the appropriateness of a particular alternative dependent on the seriousness of the infraction, the student's age and discipline history, and other circumstances and factors.

- Parent Call- Warning
- Classroom time out
- Teacher or Administrator Detention (1:1 time designated to participate in other disciplinary or supportive measures.)
- Denial of participation in school extracurricular activities or events
- Denial of right to attend non-classroom school events
- Student-parent-school behavioral contracts
- A written assignment pertinent to the unacceptable conduct
- Confiscation of materials or items that are part of the unacceptable conduct
- Academic warnings
- Score of "0" on plagiarized assignments.
- Additional class assignment(s)
- In the case of property damage, full financial restitution
- Probationary status
- Restorative practices

#### **Level 2: Emergency Removal ("Snap Suspension"):**

A student may be removed from any class, subject, or activity for up to one (1) day by the student's teacher for certain conduct as specified in the Student Code of Conduct pursuant to MCL §380.1309. A student so removed will be allowed to attend other classes taught by other teachers during the term of the one (1) day removal.

#### **Level 3: In-School or Short-Term Suspension**

Ten (10) or fewer school days, as determined by the school principal or other administrator.

In-School or Short-Term suspensions may include exclusion from Live ClassConnect sessions with access to online course materials and recordings. Suspension of Special Education or Related Services may not be suspended under this Level. Level 3 may also include exclusion from clubs and in-person events for the safety of other students and staff. Temporary suspension of webcam functionality may be included in terms of suspension.

#### **Level 4: Long- Term Suspension**

Upon recommendation of the principal of the student's school, or other administrator, the Head of School or designee may suspend a student for a period greater than ten (10) school days, but less than sixty (60) school days.

#### **Level 5: Expulsion of Sixty (60) School Days to and Including 180 School Days (See Expulsion Policy)**

Upon recommendation of the principal of the student's school, or other administrator, the Head of School or designee may expel a student for sixty (60) school days to and including 180 school days.

#### **Level 6: Permanent Expulsion or Expulsion Greater Than 180 School Days (See Expulsion Policy)**

Upon recommendation of a principal of the student’s school, or other administrator, the Head of School or designee may permanently expel a student or expel a student for greater than 180 school days.

Note: The imposition of penalties for infractions other than mandatory permanent expulsion is subject to consideration of certain factors established by state law and Board Policy, Article IV, Section 9, “Considerations Prior to Imposition of Discipline” and as set forth in this Student Code of Conduct.

Infraction	Disciplinary Level
<p><b>Prohibition of Disruption of School</b> Students shall act in a courteous a program.</p>	Level 1 – Level 4
<p><b>Compliance with Dress Code</b> <i>See Webcam Dress Code Policy</i> Students shall dress in accordance with the standards described below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A shirt must be worn at all times unless at an activity involving swimsuits.</li> <li>• Pants must be worn on the waist so no undergarments are showing.</li> <li>• No halter tops, strapless garments, or garments revealing midriff may be worn to a school event</li> <li>• No garments that reveal undergarments or that are see through may be worn to a school event</li> <li>• No hats, stocking caps, doo rags, bandanas may be worn inside buildings at school events</li> <li>• No clothing that has profanity, drug or offensive slogans may be worn to school events</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> This section is enforced for students when attending a school function such as testing, Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan outings, web-cam usage, orientations, or other face-to-face events</p>	Level 1 – Level 4
<p><b>Prohibition of Offensive Language</b> Students shall not use offensive language. Violation of this includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curses, uses vulgar or obscene language</li> <li>• Sending, forwarding offensive, sexually-oriented, or threatening messages, pictures or symbols of offensive nature</li> </ul>	Level 1 – Level 4
<p><b>Mandate of Academic Honesty</b> <i>See Student Acceptable Use Policy</i> Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty in their work. Violation of this includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copying work from another person</li> <li>• Plagiarizes work of another including use of AI programs</li> <li>• Using answer keys provided for learning coach</li> <li>• Copies work from internet sources without proper citations</li> <li>• Forges notes</li> <li>• Shares test questions with others</li> <li>• See Student Acceptable Use Policy regarding use of AI</li> </ul>	Level 1 – Level 4
<p><b>Abuse of Computer or Internet Privileges</b> <i>See Student Acceptable Use Policy</i> Students shall respect the computer privileges granted to them. Violations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives his/her password to another individual or uses another individual’s account.</li> </ul>	Level 1 – Level 4

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Illegally downloads copyrighted materials from the internet.</li> <li>• Visits sites on the internet which contain sexually explicit material.</li> <li>• Harms or destroys data of another student or person, the internet or other networks.</li> <li>• Creates, downloads, or uploads computer viruses; or</li> <li>• Violates any rule outlined in the Acceptable Use Policy.</li> </ul> <p>In addition to Leveled Disciplinary measures students will be required to pay full restitution for acts of deliberate damage or graffiti. Costs for damage to school district property will include labor, materials, consulting fees and other costs associated with replacing or restoring the damaged property.</p>	
<p><b>Prohibition of Threats</b>  <i>See Bullying and Cyber-Bullying Policy</i>  A student shall not communicate, directly or indirectly, any threat to another member of the school community that places him/her in fear of injury, pain, or ridicule. Serious threats to life or safety are included in the Bullying Policy and will result in zero tolerance.</p>	Level 3 - Expulsion
<p><b>Prohibition of Fighting/Physical Assault</b>  <i>See Physical and Verbal Assault Policy</i>  Students shall refrain from confrontations involving physical contact with any members of the school community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student to Student</li> <li>• Student to Staff</li> </ul>	Level 3 - Expulsion
<p><b>Prohibition of Tobacco Products and Paraphernalia</b>  A student may not possess or use any tobacco product or vape, cigarette lighters, matches, rolling papers, pipes, or other such paraphernalia.</p>	Level 1 – Level 4
<p><b>Prohibition of Drugs or Alcohol for Personal Use</b>  A student shall not use, consume, possess, attempt to possess, deliver, sell or share, or be under any degree of influence of alcoholic beverages or drugs whose use is prohibited by state or federal law.</p>	Level 3 – Level 4
<p><b>Prohibition of Bullying and Serious Threats</b>  <i>See Bullying and Cyber-Bullying Policy</i>  Bullying of a pupil, whether by other students, staff, visitors, parents, guests, contractors, or volunteers, is prohibited. All students are protected under this policy, and bullying is prohibited without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus. Bullying is defined as any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one or more pupils either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more pupils;</li> <li>2. Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan’s educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress;</li> <li>3. Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil’s physical or mental health; or</li> <li>4. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.</li> </ol>	Level 1 – Expulsion
<p><b>Prohibition of Harassment</b>  <i>See Non-Discrimination Policies</i></p>	Level 3 - Expulsion

Students shall not harass members of the school community. A student violates this by demanding sexual favors, threatens, intimidates or creates a hostile environment because of someone’s gender, age, race, color, sexual orientation (known or perceived), national origin, religion, disability, socioeconomic status and/or political beliefs.	
<b>Weapons, Arson, Criminal Sexual Conduct</b> <i>See Weapons, Arson, Criminal Sexual Conduct Policy</i>	Level 3- Expulsion

### Search and Seizure Policy

To maintain order and discipline at school functions and protect the safety and welfare of students and school personnel, school authorities may search a student, student’s backpack or student automobiles in certain circumstances and may seize any illegal or unauthorized materials discovered during the search.

### Emergency Removal, Suspension and Expulsion of Students

The Board of Directors is continually concerned about the safety and welfare of Academy students and staff and, therefore, will not tolerate behavior that creates an unsafe environment, a threat to safety or undue disruption of the educational environment.

### Factors to be Considered Before Suspending or Expelling a Student

The Board of Directors also recognizes that exclusion from the educational program of the Academy’s is a severe sanction that should only be imposed after careful and appropriate consideration. Except as otherwise noted below with respect to possession of a firearm in a weapon free school zone, if suspension or expulsion of a student is considered, the School Leader shall consider the following factors prior to making a determination of whether to suspend or expel:

- A. the student's age
- B. the student's disciplinary history
- C. whether the student has a disability
- D. the seriousness of the violation or behavior  
whether the violation or behavior committed by the student threatened the safety of any student or staff member
- E. whether restorative practices will be used to address the violation or behavior
- F. whether a lesser intervention would properly address the violation or behavior.

The School Leader will exercise discretion over whether or not to suspend or expel a student. In exercising that discretion for a suspension of more than ten (10) days or expulsion, there is a rebuttable presumption that a suspension or expulsion is not justified unless the School Leader can demonstrate that it considered each of the factors listed above. For a suspension of ten (10) days or fewer, there is no rebuttable presumption, but the School Leader will still consider these factors in making the determination.

### Restorative Practices

The School Leader shall consider using restorative practices as an alternative to or in addition to suspension or expulsion. If the Academy determines that it will utilize restorative practices in addition to or as an alternative to suspension or expulsion of a student, it will engage in restorative practices which emphasize repairing the harm to the victim and academy community caused by the student's misconduct.

Restorative practices should be the first consideration to remediate offenses such as interpersonal conflicts, bullying, verbal and physical conflicts, theft, damage to property, class disruption and harassment and cyberbullying.

If the School Leader decides to utilize restorative practices as an alternative to or in addition to suspension or expulsion, the restorative practices may include victim-offender conferences that:

- A. are initiated by the victim;
- B. are approved by the victim's parent or legal guardian or, if the victim is at least fifteen (15), by the victim;
- C. are attended voluntarily by the victim, a victim advocate, the offender, members of the academy community, and supporters of the victim and the offender (the "restorative practices team");
- D. would provide an opportunity for the offender to accept responsibility for the harm caused to those affected, and to participate in setting consequences to repair the harm, such as requiring the student to apologize; participate in community service, restoration of emotional or material losses, or counseling; pay restitution; or any combination of these.

The selected consequences and time limits for their completion will be incorporated into an agreement to be signed by all participants.

### **Due Process**

The Board recognizes exclusion from the educational programs of the Academy, whether by suspension or expulsion, is the most severe sanction that can be imposed on a student and is one that cannot be imposed without appropriate due process, since exclusion deprives a child of the right to an education. The Board also recognizes that it may be necessary for a teacher to remove a student from class for conduct disruptive to the learning environment, and that such removals are not subject to a prior hearing, provided the removal is for a period of less than twenty-four (24) hours. However, if an emergency removal may result in a suspension, then due process must be ensured.

In all cases resulting in short-term suspension, long-term suspension or expulsion, appropriate due process rights must be observed. The School Leader shall check to make sure the student is not classified as disabled under Section 504. Students with disabilities under IDEA or Section 504 shall be expelled only in accordance with their rights under Federal law.

For purposes of this policy, suspension shall be either short-term (not more than ten (10) days) or long-term (for more than ten (10) days but less than permanent expulsion) removal of a student from a regular Academy program. The School Leader may suspend a student for a period not to exceed 10 school days.

For purposes of this policy, unless otherwise defined in Federal and/or State law, expulsion is defined as the permanent exclusion of a student from the Academy. Students who are expelled may petition for reinstatement as provided below.

### **Emergency Removal or Short-Term Suspension**

A student may be removed from a class, subject, or activity for one (1) day by his/her teacher for certain conduct as specified in the Code of Conduct, or he/she may be given a short-term suspension by the School Leader. A student so removed may be allowed to attend other classes taught by other teachers during the term of the one (1) day removal. A student removed from the same class for ten (10) days will be entitled to the process for short-term suspensions. A student removed from the same class for more than ten (10) days will be entitled to the process for long-term suspensions. The Board designates the School Leader as its representative at any hearings regarding the appeal of a suspension.

### **Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion**

Due process shall be followed in all circumstances in which a student may be expelled or suspended for a period of more than ten (10) days. The School Leader may recommend to the Board a long-term suspension or that a student be expelled.



The School Leader may act as the hearing officer. The Board may suspend a student for a period longer than ten (10) days or expel a student. An appeal may be made to the Board if there is a claimed violation of substantive or procedural due process rights.

In all cases resulting in short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion, appropriate due process rights must be observed.

### **Persistent Disobedience or Gross Misconduct/CSC Against Another Academy Student**

Any student may be removed from the classroom, and/or, after consideration of the factors identified above, suspended or expelled for persistent disobedience or gross misconduct or if the student commits criminal sexual conduct against another student enrolled in the Academy regardless of the location of the conduct. A student may not be expelled or excluded from the regular academy program based on pregnancy status.

In recognition of the negative impact on a student's education, the Board encourages the Academy's administrators to view suspensions, particularly those over ten (10) days, and permanent expulsions as discipline of last resort, except where these disciplines are required by law. Alternatives to avoid or to improve undesirable behaviors should be explored when possible prior to implementing or requesting a suspension or expulsion.

### **Physical and Verbal Assault**

Unless a different determination is made after consideration of the factors identified above, the Academy shall permanently expel a student in grade six or above if that student commits physical assault at the Academy against a staff member, a volunteer, or a contractor.

Unless a different determination is made after consideration of the factors identified above, the Academy shall suspend or expel a student in grade six or above for up to 180 school days if the student commits physical assault at the Academy against another student.

Physical assault is defined as "intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence."

Unless a different determination is made after consideration of the factors identified above, the Academy shall suspend or expel a student in grade six or above and may discipline, suspend or expel a student in grade five and below for a period of time as determined at the Board's discretion if the student commits verbal assault at the Academy against a Academy employee, volunteer, or contractor or makes a bomb threat or similar threat directed at an academy building, property, or at an academy-related activity.

Verbal assault is a communicated intent to inflict physical or other harm on another person, with a present intent and ability to act on the threat.

"At the Academy" means in a classroom, elsewhere on academy premises, on an academy bus or other academy-related vehicle, or at an academy-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on academy premises.

### **Weapons, Arson, Criminal Sexual Conduct**

In compliance with State and Federal law, and unless a different determination is made after consideration of the factors identified above, the Academy shall expel any student who possesses a dangerous weapon, other than a firearm, in the Academy's weapon-free school zone (except as noted below), commits either arson or criminal sexual conduct in an academy building or on academy property, including academy buses and other Academy transportation, or pleads to, is convicted of or is adjudicated of criminal sexual conduct against another student enrolled in the Academy.

In compliance with State and Federal law, the Academy shall expel any student who possesses a firearm in the Academy's weapon-free school zone in violation of State law, unless the student can establish the mitigating factors relating to possession of a dangerous weapon set out below, by clear and convincing evidence.

For purposes of this policy, a "dangerous weapon" is defined by law as a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over three (3) inches in length, pocketknife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles. This definition also includes other devices designed to (or likely to) inflict bodily harm, including, but not limited to, air guns and explosive devices. The term "firearm" is defined as any weapon (including a starter gun) that will, is designed to, or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of the explosive, the frame, or the bearer of any such weapon, as well as a firearm muffler, firearm silencer, or any such destructive device.

The Academy need not expel a student for possession of a dangerous weapon, including a firearm, if the student can establish in a clear and convincing manner the following mitigating factor(s) to the satisfaction of the Board the: object or instrument was not possessed for use as a weapon, or for direct (or indirect) delivery to another person for use as a weapon; or

- A. weapon was not knowingly possessed; or
- B. student did not know (or have reason to know) that the object or instrument in his/her possession constituted a dangerous weapon; or
- C. weapon was possessed at the suggestion, request, direction of, or with the express permission of the School Leader or the police.

There is a rebuttable presumption that expulsion for possessing the weapon is not justified if the School Leader determines in writing that the student has established that he or she fits under one of the exceptions above by clear and convincing evidence, and that the student has no previous history of suspension or expulsion.

For expulsions for dangerous weapons, arson, criminal sexual conduct or assault upon an employee, volunteer or contractor, the School Leader shall provide that the expulsion is duly noted in the student's record, the student is referred to the Department of Human Services or Department of Community Health within three (3) school days after the expulsion, and the parents are informed of the referral. Furthermore, if a student who is expelled is below the age of sixteen (16), the School Leader shall ensure notification of the expulsion is given to the Juvenile Division of the Probate Court. In compliance with Federal law, the Educational Service Provider School Leader shall also refer any student (regardless of age) expelled for possession of a dangerous weapon to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system serving the Academy. In addition, the School Leader shall send a copy of this policy to the State Department of Education and shall include a description of the circumstances surrounding the expulsion of the student for possessing a firearm or weapon in the Academy's weapon-free school zone, together with the name of the Academy, the number of students so expelled, and the types of firearms or weapons brought into the weapon-free school zone.

A student expelled under this policy for dangerous weapons, arson, criminal sexual conduct or assault upon an employee, volunteer or contractor may apply for reinstatement in accordance with the following guidelines:

- A. If the student is in grade five (5) or below at the time of the expulsion and was expelled for possessing a firearm or threatening another person with a dangerous weapon, the parents, legal guardian, adult student, or emancipated minor may submit a request for reinstatement after sixty (60) school days from the date of expulsion, but the student may not be reinstated before ninety (90) school days from the expulsion date.
- B. If the student is in grade five (5) or below at the time of the expulsion and was expelled for a reason other than possessing a firearm or threatening another person with a dangerous weapon, the parents, legal

guardian, or emancipated minor may submit a request for reinstatement at any time, but the student may not be reinstated before ten (10) school days from the expulsion date.

- C. If the student is in grade six (6) or above at the time of the expulsion, the parents, legal guardian, adult student, or emancipated minor may submit a request for reinstatement after one hundred and fifty (150) school days from the date of the expulsion, but the student may not be reinstated before one hundred eighty (180) school days from the expulsion date.
- D. The parent, adult student, or emancipated minor shall submit the request for reinstatement to the School Leader.
- E. Within ten (10) school days after receiving the petition, the Board shall appoint a committee consisting of two (2) Board members, an academy administrator, a teacher, and an academy-parent representative. During this time period, the School Leader shall prepare and submit for consideration by the committee information concerning the circumstances of the expulsion and any factors mitigating for or against reinstatement.
- F. Within ten (10) school days after being appointed, the committee shall review all pertinent information and submit its recommendation to the Board. The recommendation may be for unconditional reinstatement, conditional reinstatement, or non-reinstatement, based on the committee's consideration of the following:
  - 1. extent to which reinstatement would create a risk of harm to students or academy staff;
  - 2. extent to which reinstatement would create a risk of academy or individual liability for the Board or academy staff;
  - 3. age and maturity of the student;
  - 4. student's academy record before the expulsion incident;
  - 5. student's attitude concerning the expulsion incident;
  - 6. student's behavior since the expulsion and the prospects for remediation;
  - 7. The degree of cooperation and support the parent has provided and will provide if the student is reinstated (if the request was filed by a parent), including, but not limited to the parent's receptiveness toward any conditions placed on the reinstatement. Such conditions, for example, might include a written agreement by the student and/or a parent who filed the reinstatement request to accomplish the following:
    - a. abide by a behavior contract involving the student, his/her parents, and an outside agency;
    - b. participate in an anger management program or other counseling activities;
    - c. cooperate in processing and discussing periodic progress reviews;
    - d. meet other conditions deemed appropriate by the committee;
    - e. accept the consequences for not fulfilling the agreed upon conditions.
  - 8. student's behavior since the expulsion and the prospects for remediation.

The Board shall make its decision no later than the next regular Board meeting following the committee's submission of its recommendations. The Board's decision shall be final and is not subject to appeal.

In the event a student who has been permanently expelled from another academy requests admission to this Academy, in making its decision, the Board shall follow the same procedure it has established in paragraphs A-F, above, for the reinstatement of a student.

Students expelled for reasons other than dangerous weapons, arson, criminal sexual conduct or assault upon an employee, volunteer or contractor may also petition the Board for reinstatement. The Board may, at its discretion, consider the petition upon any standards and with any procedures it determines appropriate under the circumstances.

The School Leader shall ensure Board policies and procedures regarding a student's rights to due process are followed when dealing with a possible suspension or expulsion under this policy.

### **In-School Discipline**

The purpose of this policy is to provide an alternative to out of school suspension. The availability of in-school discipline options is dependent upon the financial ability of the Board to support such a program.

In-school discipline will only be offered at the discretion of the School Leader for offenses found in the Student Code of Conduct.

The School Leader is to establish procedures for the proper operation of such a program and to ensure appropriate due-process procedures are followed as applicable.

### **Due Process Rights**

The Board recognizes the importance of safeguarding a student's constitutional rights, particularly when subject to the Academy's disciplinary procedures.

To better ensure appropriate due-process is provided a student, the Board establishes the following:

**A. Students Subject to Short-Term Suspension**

Except when emergency removal is warranted, a student must be given at least oral notice of the charges against him/her and the opportunity to respond prior to the implementation of a suspension. When emergency removal has been implemented, notice and opportunity to respond shall occur as soon as reasonably possible. The School Leader or other designated administrator shall provide the opportunity to be heard and shall be responsible for making the suspension decision. An appeal may be addressed to the School Leader whose decision will be final.

**B. Students Subject to Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion**

A student and his/her parent or guardian must be given written notice of the intention to suspend or expel and the reasons therefore, and must also be given an opportunity to appear before the School Leader with a representative to answer the charges. The student and/or his/her guardian must also be provided a brief description of the student's rights and the hearing procedure, a list of the witnesses who will provide testimony to the Board, and a summary of the facts to which the witnesses will testify. At the student/parent's request, the hearing shall be held in closed session, but the Board must act publicly. The Board shall act by providing a written decision on any appeal of an expulsion, a request for reinstatement, or a request for admission after permanent expulsion from another academy.

The School Leader shall develop procedures to ensure all members of the staff use the above guidelines when dealing with students. In addition, this statement of due process rights shall be placed in all student handbooks, in a manner that facilitates understanding by students and their parents.

### **Corporal Punishment**

While recognizing that students may require disciplinary action in various forms, the Board does not condone the use of unreasonable force and fear as an appropriate procedure in student discipline.

Staff shall not use physical force or violence to compel obedience. If all other means fail, staff members may always resort to the removal of the student from the classroom or Academy through suspension or expulsion procedures.

Within the scope of their employment, all staff may use reasonable force and apply restraint to accomplish the following:

- A. restrain or remove a student who refuses to comply with a request to behave or report to the office;

- B. quell a disturbance threatening physical injury to self or others;
- C. obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects within the control of the student, for either self-defense; or
- D. the protection of persons or property.

In accordance with State law, corporal punishment shall not be permitted. If any staff member (full-time, part-time, or substitute) deliberately inflicts, or causes to be inflicted, physical pain upon the student (by hitting, paddling, spanking, slapping or any other kind of physical force) as a means of discipline, the staff member may be subject to discipline and possibly criminal assault charges. This prohibition also applies to volunteers and those with whom the Academy contracts for services.

## Discipline of Students with Disabilities

If a student violates the Code of Student Conduct, before consequences or punishment are imposed, it must be considered whether the student has a disability evidenced by evaluation documents current or pending. While all students may be disciplined, it is unjust to punish a child when the offense is directly related to his/her disability or when the IEP is not implemented. Disciplinary actions give students with disabilities extra legal protections when the discipline constitutes a change in placement.

A “change in placement” is a legal term that applies to the following situations:

- The removal is for more than 10 consecutive days; or
- The student has been subjected to a series of suspensions that constitute a pattern

If the offense and subsequent suspensions do not exceed 10 consecutive days nor constitute a pattern or suspensions using the Documentation of Pattern planning form, then it is not a change in placement and the student may be subject to the same consequence that applies to all students who violate the Code of Student Conduct.

If the offense is a change in placement, the school team (including the parent or guardian) must hold a Manifestation Determination Review meeting within 10 days of the decision to remove the student to determine two issues:

- Was the student’s misconduct caused by or directly and substantially related to the student’s disability; or
- Was the student’s misconduct a direct result of the school’s failure to follow the child’s IEP?

The parent/guardian must be provided a copy of the Special Education Procedural safeguards. If the team answers “yes” to either question, then the student’s behavior is a manifestation of his or her disability. The student may not be suspended, expelled or transferred to a remedial disciplinary school as a punishment for misbehavior. The team must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and create a behavior plan addressing ways that the school can help a student with the conduct at issue. If the student already has a behavior plan, the plan must be reviewed and modified to address how the school can better assist the student with the conduct at issue.

If all team members agree that the student’s conduct was not a manifestation of his disability, then the student may be subject to the same consequences as all students. However, during the period of expulsion or transfer to an alternative placement or remedial disciplinary setting, the student must continue to receive special education services prescribed by his IEP and a Behavior Plan must be created or revised to address the offending conduct.

If a student:

- Possesses illegal drugs;
- Is selling prescription drugs;
- Carries a weapon; or

- Causes serious bodily injury to another either at school or during a school related activity.

The school may immediately remove the student for up to forty-five (45) school days to an alternative or remedial disciplinary setting because drugs, weapons, and serious bodily injury are so dangerous to a safe school regardless of whether a child has a disability or even if the team believes that the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability.

To comply with the law, a 45 school day emergency removal for serious bodily injury must be serious, i.e. requiring medical treatment, etc. During the forty-five (45) school day period, the school must convene a manifestation determination meeting. If the school determines that the conduct is a manifestation, the school may have the child re-evaluated, create or revise an existing behavior plan, or hold an IEP meeting to consider a more intensive special education placement upon the expiration of the 45 day alternative placement or sooner. If all team members determine that the conduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, then the 45 school day emergency placement may proceed to a disciplinary proceeding afforded to all students.

If the parent or guardian disagrees with the team's decision that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the parent or guardian may request a due process hearing to challenge this finding. If the hearing officer agrees with the parent or guardian, the student will remain in the school where the offense was committed unless the parent or guardian and the school agree otherwise.

## **Emergency Hearing for Dangerousness**

If a school has solid reasons to believe that keeping the student in his current school is "substantially likely to result in injury to the child or others", the school will consult with the Special Programs Director who may request an emergency hearing to ask a hearing officer to transfer the student to an alternative setting for up to 45 school days. Dangerousness may exist even if there is no Code of Conduct violation. It is a consideration based on serious safety concerns for the student and/or the school community.

## **Bullying and Cyber Bullying**

### **Anti-Bullying Policy**

#### **Reference:**

The Matt Epling Safe School Law, Public Act 241 of 2011, as amended by Public Act 478 of 2014 (MCL § 380.1310b).

The Board believes that a safe and nurturing educational environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Therefore, it is the policy of the Academy to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all of its students. Appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of students, as well as administrators, faculty, staff, visitors, and volunteers.

### **Bullying and Cyberbullying Are Prohibited**

Bullying and cyberbullying of a student, whether by other students, staff, visitors, Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors and volunteers, is prohibited. All pupils are protected under this policy, and bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus.

### **Definition of Bullying**

“Bullying” means any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, including, but not limited to, cyberbullying, that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more pupils either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- A. Substantially interfering with the educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more pupils.
- B. Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the school district’s or public school’s educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
- C. Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil’s physical or mental health.
- D. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

“Cyberbullying” means any electronic communication that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more pupils either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- A. Substantially interfering with the educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more pupils.
- B. Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the school district’s or public school’s educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.  
Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil’s physical or mental health.
- C. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Since “bullying” also includes “cyberbullying,” any reference in this policy to “bullying” shall also be deemed to refer to “cyberbullying.”

Bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited at school. “At school” is defined as on school premises, at school- sponsored activities or events, in a school-related vehicle, or using telecommunications access device or a telecommunications service provider if the telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider is owned by or under the control of the school district.

“Telecommunications access device” and “telecommunications service provider” mean those terms as defined in Section 219a of the Michigan Penal Code (MCL § 750.219a).

Bullying and cyberbullying that does not occur “at school,” as defined above, but that causes a substantial disruption to the educational environment may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with this policy and applicable law.

### **Reporting and Investigating Reports of Bullying**

Every student is encouraged to report any situation that he or she believes to be bullying behavior directed toward a student to a teacher, a counselor, administrator, or other staff member. Staff members shall report any reports made by students or situations that they believe to be bullying behavior directed toward a student to the School Leader. Complaints against the School Leader and/or Educational Service Provider shall be reported to the Board.

Under state law, a school employee, school volunteer, student, or parent or guardian who promptly reports in good faith an act of bullying to the appropriate school official designated in this policy and who makes this report in compliance with the procedures set forth in this policy is immune from a cause of action for damages arising out of the reporting itself or any failure to remedy the reported incident. This immunity does not apply to a school official responsible for implementing this policy or for remedying the bullying, when acting in that capacity.

Retaliation or false accusation against a target of bullying, a witness, or another person with information about an act of bullying is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as suspected bullying behavior. Making intentionally false accusations of bullying is likewise prohibited. Retaliation and making intentionally false accusations of bullying may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

All complaints about bullying that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated and documented. The School Leader or designee is responsible for the investigation. If the investigation results in a finding that bullying has occurred, it shall result in prompt and appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion for students, up to and including discharge for employees, and up to and including exclusion from school property for parents, guests, volunteers, and contractors. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

The Board may utilize restorative practices that emphasize repairing the harm to the victim and school community in the correction of bullying behavior, which may include victim-offender conferences that:

- A. Are initiated by the victim;
- B. Are approved by the victim's parent or legal guardian or, if the victim is at least 15, by the victim;
- C. Are attended voluntarily by the victim, a victim advocate, the offender, members of the school community, and supporters of the victim and the offender (the "restorative practices team"); and
- D. Would provide an opportunity for the offender to accept responsibility for the harm caused to those affected, and to participate in setting consequences to repair the harm, such as requiring the student to apologize; participate in community service, restoration of emotional or material losses, or counseling; pay restitution; or any combination of these. The selected consequences and time limits for their completion will be incorporated into an agreement to be signed by all participants. Where the investigation results in a finding that bullying has occurred, both the parent or legal guardian of a victim of bullying and the parent or legal guardian of a perpetrator of the bullying shall be notified promptly in writing. In addition, administrators investigating alleged bullying may notify parents of the victim or perpetrator of bullying sooner than the conclusion of the investigation if circumstances dictate such earlier notification.

The Academy shall document any prohibited incident that is reported and shall document all verified incidents of bullying and the resulting consequences, including the required notification of parents or guardians and any discipline and referrals.

### **Confidentiality**

The Academy will comply with all applicable laws regarding confidentiality of personally identifiable information within education records. In addition, the identity of an individual who reports an act of bullying or cyberbullying shall be and remain confidential. The School Leader, or the School Leader's designee, shall ensure that the name of an individual who reports an act of bullying or cyberbullying is withheld from the alleged perpetrator and the perpetrator's parent(s), legal guardian(s) and representative(s), and is redacted from any report of bullying or cyberbullying that is publicly disclosed.

### **Notification**

This policy will be annually circulated to parents and students, and shall be posted on the Academy website.

### **Reporting**

As required by state statute, the Academy shall provide a report of all verified incidents of bullying and other required information to the Michigan Department of Education on an annual basis, according to the form and procedures established by the Department.



## Use of School Property

Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan provides materials, computer, printer, books and other curricular supplies. All provided materials are school property and must be kept in good condition. Parents/guardians are responsible for the repair or replacement of all lost, stolen or damaged school property. A list of property that must be returned is provided to parents. All property and equipment must be returned in good, working condition upon withdrawal from the program. All printed materials are copyrighted. Unauthorized copying of those materials is a copyright infringement. Materials cannot be sold or transferred. Materials are to be used solely by the student in his or her studies while enrolled in the school. Parents/Guardians are to comply with this policy and all the terms and conditions of the Use of Instructional Property Agreement submitted with the enrollment materials.

## Webcams

All laptops and desktop computers provided to students will include a webcam. Eventually, HVAM intends to increase the ability for all participants in a Class Connect session to collaborate with webcams enabled. While increased webcam exposure can enhance the collaborative and interactive nature of live instruction, it can also pose challenges with respect to proper webcam etiquette and disciplinary action based on webcam usage or misuse.

Use of a webcam can be limited or prohibited at any time if proper webcam etiquette or behavior is not followed. The webcam should be used for educational purposes and academic collaboration only. The HVAM student code of conduct policy applies to all webcam interactions. In addition to common sense etiquette, the following guidelines must also be followed.

## Weapons

- Absolutely no weapons real or perceived as real, should be visible on screen.
- This includes weapons in the student's possession, in the background, on posters, etc.

## Dress Code for interaction on Web Cam

HVAM will not interfere with the right of students and their parents to make decisions regarding their appearance, except when their choices interfere with the educational program of HVAM. The Board authorizes the Head of School to establish a reasonable dress code to promote a safe and healthy school setting and enhance the educational environment. The Head of School is permitted to establish such dress code guidelines as are necessary to promote discipline, maintain order, secure the safety of students, and provide a healthy environment conducive to academic purposes. Such guidelines shall prohibit student dress practices which:

- A. present a hazard to the health or safety of the student or to others in the school;
- B. materially interfere with school work, create disorder, or disrupt the educational program;
- C. cause excessive wear or damage to school property;
- D. prevent the student from achieving his/her educational objectives.

Clothing must be appropriate for a learning environment even when exhibited on a webcam. The following should not be worn.

- Distracting clothing
- Revealing clothing
- Clothing with content relative to drugs, alcohol or any other controlled substance
- Clothing with content relative to explicit language or inappropriate content, such as weapons
- Gang attire
- Costume masks
- Head coverings (such as inappropriate hats and beanies) or sunglasses worn in a building during school hours; no bandanas (all colors), do-rags (all colors), hairnets, surgical/shower caps

- (Exceptions will be made for religious or medical reasons.)

Placement of Webcam: Efforts should be made to locate the webcam in an area that meets the following suggestions:

- Limit background noise
- A quiet area without distractions
- Area where other people or animals are not visible – siblings, pets or other people in the home should not appear on camera

**Webcams cannot be enabled without the student’s knowledge and can only be enabled for educational purposes.**

The student/parent has the option of disabling or covering the webcam, unless the webcam is required to be engaged and visible for attendance confirmation, course requirements or other educational purposes. Certain courses or assessments (such as STAR or Reading Assessments) may require face-to-face interaction via webcam. A student not wishing to engage on a webcam may seek an alternative by contacting their teacher or principal.

## Acceptable Use Guidelines

Technology directly affects the ways in which information is accessed, communicated, and transferred in society. Educators are expected to continually adapt their means and methods of instruction, and the way they approach student learning, to incorporate the latest technologies. The Board of Directors provides Information & Technology Resources (as defined in Bylaw 0100) (collectively, "Academy Information & Technology Resources") to support the educational and professional needs of its students and staff. With respect to students, Academy Information & Technology Resources afford them the opportunity to acquire the skills and knowledge to learn effectively and live productively in a digital world. The Board of Directors provides students with access to the Internet for educational purposes only and utilizes online educational services/apps to enhance the instruction delivered to its students. The Academy’s computer network and Internet system does not serve as a public access service or a public forum, and the Board imposes reasonable restrictions on its use consistent with its stated educational purpose.

The Board regulates the use of Academy Information & Technology Resources in a manner consistent with applicable local, State, and Federal laws, the Academy’s educational mission, and articulated expectations of student conduct as delineated in the Student Code of Conduct. This policy and its related administrative guidelines and the Student Code of Conduct govern students’ use of Academy Information & Technology Resources and students’ personal communication devices when they are connected to Academy Information & Technology Resources, including online educational services/apps, regardless of whether such use takes place on or off school property (see Policy 5136).

Students are prohibited from using Academy Information & Technology Resources to engage in illegal conduct (e.g., libel, slander, vandalism, harassment, theft, plagiarism, inappropriate access, etc.) or conduct that violates this Policy and its related administrative guidelines and the Student Code of Conduct (e.g., making personal attacks or injurious comments, invading a person’s privacy, etc.). Nothing herein, however, shall infringe on students’ First Amendment rights. Because its Information & Technology Resources are not unlimited, the Board may institute restrictions aimed at preserving these resources, such as placing limits on use of bandwidth, storage space, and printers.

Students have no right or expectation to privacy when using Academy Information & Technology Resources (including, but not limited to, privacy in the content of their personal files, messages/e-mails, and records of their online activity).

While the Board uses various technologies to limit students using its Information & Technology Resources to only use/access online educational services/apps and resources that have been pre-approved for the purpose of instruction, study, and research related to the curriculum, it is impossible to prevent students from accessing and/or coming in contact with online content that has not been pre-approved for use by students of certain ages. It is no longer possible for educators and community members to review and screen materials to assess their appropriateness for supporting and enriching the

curriculum according to adopted procedures and reasonable selection criteria (taking into account the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities, and developmental levels of the students who would be exposed to them) when significant portions of students' education take place online or through the use of online educational services/apps.

Pursuant to Federal law, the Board implements technology protection measures that protect against (e.g., filter or block) access to visual displays/depictions/materials that are obscene, constitute child pornography, and/or are harmful to minors, as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). At the discretion of the Board or the School Leader, the technology protection measures may be configured to protect against access to other material considered inappropriate for students to access. The Academy also utilizes software and/or hardware to monitor online activity of students to restrict access to child pornography and other material that is obscene, objectionable, inappropriate, and/or harmful to minors. However, the Board is cognizant of the fact that such software and/or hardware is not perfect and relies on students to self-police (and immediately cease viewing) online activity that would otherwise be in conflict with these policies and to immediately report such to the School Leader. The technology protection measures may not be disabled at any time that students may be using Academy Information & Technology Resources, if such disabling will cease to protect against access to materials that are prohibited under CIPA. Any student who attempts to disable the technology protection measures will be disciplined.

The Educational Service Provider may temporarily or permanently unblock access to websites or online educational services/apps containing appropriate material, if access to such sites has been mistakenly, improperly, or inadvertently blocked by the technology protection measures. The determination of whether material is appropriate or inappropriate shall be based on the content of the material and the intended use of the material, not on the protection actions of the technology protection measures.

Parents are advised that a determined user may be able to gain access to online content and/or services/apps that the Board has not authorized for educational purposes. In fact, it is impossible to guarantee students will not gain access through the Internet to content that they and/or their parents may find inappropriate, offensive, objectionable, or controversial. Parents of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using the Internet.

The Educational Service Provider, is directed to prepare procedures which address students' safety and security while using e-mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications, and prohibit disclosure of personal identification information of minors and unauthorized access (e.g., "hacking"), cyberbullying and other unlawful or inappropriate activities by minors online.

The School Leader is responsible for providing training so that students under their supervision are knowledgeable about this policy and its accompanying guidelines.

Pursuant to Federal law, students shall receive education about the following:

- ✓ safety and security while using e-mail, chat rooms, social media, and other forms of direct electronic communications;
- ✓ the dangers inherent with the online disclosure of personally identifiable information;
- ✓ the consequences of unauthorized access (e.g., "hacking", "harvesting", "digital piracy", "data mining", etc.);
- ✓ cyberbullying, and other unlawful or inappropriate activities by students online; and
- ✓ unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personally-identifiable information regarding minors.

The Board directs the Educational Service Provider to implement procedures, guidance and instruction to their students regarding the appropriate use of District Information & Technology Resources and online safety and security as specified above. Additionally, such training shall include, but not be limited to, education concerning appropriate online behavior including interacting with others on social media, including in chat rooms, and cyberbullying awareness and response. Furthermore, the Educational Service Provider will implement monitoring procedures for the online activities of students

while they are at school.

All students who use Academy Information & Technology Resources (and their parents if they are minors) are required to sign a written agreement to abide by the terms and conditions of this policy and its accompanying procedures.

Students will be assigned an Academy-provided email account that they are required to utilize for all Academy-related electronic communications, including those to staff members, peers, and individuals and/or organizations outside the Academy with whom they are communicating for Academy-related projects and assignments. Further, as directed and authorized by their teachers, they shall use their Academy-assigned email account when signing up/registering for access to various online educational services/apps.

In order to keep Academy Information & Technology Resources operating in a safe, secure, efficient, effective, and beneficial manner to all users, students are required to comply with all Academy-established cybersecurity procedures for which they have been trained. The School Leader is responsible for providing such training on a regular basis and measuring the effectiveness of the training.

Students are responsible for good behavior when using Academy Information & Technology Resources – i.e., behavior comparable to that expected of students when they are in physical classrooms and academy buildings and at academy-sponsored events. Because communications the Internet are often public in nature, general academy rules for behavior and communication apply. The Board does not approve any use of its Information & Technology Resources that is not authorized by or conducted strictly in compliance with this policy and its accompanying procedures.

Students may only use Academy Information & Technology Resources to access or use social media if it is done for educational purposes in accordance with their teacher’s approved plan for such use.

### **Use of Artificial Intelligence/Natural Language Processing Tools For School Work**

Students are required to rely on their own knowledge, skills, and resources when completing school work. In order to ensure the integrity of the educational process and to promote fair and equal opportunities for all students, except as outlined below, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Natural Language Processing (NLP) tools (collectively, “AI/NLP tools”) is strictly prohibited for the completion of schoolwork. The use of AI/NLP tools, without the express permission/consent of a teacher, undermines the learning and problem-solving skills that are essential to academic success and that the staff is tasked to develop in each student. Students are encouraged to develop their own knowledge, skills, and understanding of course material rather than relying solely on AI/NLP tools and they should ask their teachers when they have questions and/or need assistance. Unauthorized use of AI/NLP tools is considered a form of plagiarism and any student found using these tools without permission or in a prohibited manner will be disciplined in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Notwithstanding the preceding, students can use AI/NLP tools in the school setting if they receive prior permission/consent from their teacher, so long as they use the AI/NLP tools in an ethical and responsible manner. Teachers have the discretion to authorize students to use AI/NLP tools for the following uses:

- Research assistance: AI/NLP tools can be used to help students quickly and efficiently search for and find relevant information for their school projects and assignments.
- Data Analysis: AI/NLP tools can be used to help students to analyze, understand, and interpret large amounts of data, such as text documents or social media posts. This can be particularly useful for research projects or data analysis assignments – e.g., scientific experiments and marketing research.
- Language translation: AI/NLP tools can be used to translate texts or documents into different languages, which can be helpful for students who are learning a new language or for students who are studying texts written in a

different language.

- Writing assistance: AI/NLP tools can provide grammar and spelling corrections, as well as suggest alternative word choices and sentence structure, to help students improve their writing skills.
- Accessibility: AI/NLP tools can be used to help students with disabilities access and understand written materials. For example, text-to-speech software can help students with specific learning disabilities or visual impairments to read texts and AI-powered translation tools can help students with hearing impairments understand spoken language.

As outlined above, under appropriate circumstances, AI/NLP tools can be effectively used as a supplement to and not a replacement for traditional learning methods. Consequently, with prior teacher permission/consent, students can use such resources to help them better understand and analyze information and/or access course materials. If a student has any questions about whether they are permitted to use AI/NLP tools for a specific class assignment, they should ask their teacher.

Users who disregard this policy and its accompanying procedures may have their use privileges suspended or revoked, and disciplinary action taken against them. Users are personally responsible and liable, both civilly and criminally, for uses of Academy Information & Technology Resources that are not authorized by this policy and its accompanying procedures.

## Accountability

Posting anonymous messages is not permitted unless authorized by the teacher of the online course. Impersonating another person is also strictly prohibited. Use only your own user-name and password, but do not share these with anyone.

Do not interfere with other users' ability to access Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan's Online School or Virtual High School or disclose anyone's password to others or allow them to use another user's account. You are responsible for all activity that is associated with your username and password. Change your password(s) frequently, at least once per semester or course. Do not publicly post your personal contact information (address and phone number) or anyone else's. Do not publicly post any messages that were sent to you privately. Do not download, transmit or post material that is intended for personal gain or profit, non-Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan commercial activities, non-Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan product advertising, or political lobbying on a Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan-owned instructional computing resource. Do not use Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan instructional computing resources to sell or to purchase any illegal items or substances. Do not upload or post any software that is not specifically required and approved for your assignments, on Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan's instructional computing resources. Do not post any MP3 files, compressed video, or other non-instructional files to any Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan server.

## Student Internet Safety

Do not reveal on the internet personal information about yourself or other persons. For example, you should not reveal your name, home address, telephone number, or display photographs of yourself or others to persons outside of Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan. Do not agree to meet in person, anyone you have met only on the internet and who is not affiliated with Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan.

## Network Etiquette

At Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan, parents, guardians and students are expected to follow the rules of network etiquette, or "netiquette." The word netiquette refers to common-sense guidelines for conversing with others online. Please abide by these standards. Avoid sarcasm, jargon, and slang. Swear words are unacceptable. Never use derogatory comments, including those regarding race, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, political persuasion, body type, physical or mental health, or access issues. Focus your responses on the questions or issues being discussed, not on the individuals involved. Be constructive with your criticism, not hurtful. Review

your messages before sending them. Remove easily misinterpreted language and proofread for typos. Respect other people's privacy. Do not broadcast online discussions, and never reveal another person's email address.

## **Use of Copyrighted Materials**

All materials in the courses are copyrighted and provided for use exclusively by enrolled students. Enrolled students may print or photocopy material from the website for their own use. Use by or distribution to others is prohibited unless expressly noted. Unauthorized copying or distribution may result in revoked access to course(s).

Users shall not upload, download, transmit, or post copyrighted software or copyrighted materials, materials protected by trade secrets or other protections using Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan computer resources. This includes copyrighted graphics of cartoon characters or other materials that may appear to be non-copyright protected.

## **Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan Indemnification Provision**

Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan assumes no responsibility for information obtained via the internet which may be illegal, defamatory, inaccurate or offensive. Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan assumes no responsibility for any claims, losses, damages, costs or other obligations arising from the use of instructional computing resources. Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan also denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through user access. Any statement accessible on the computer network or the internet is understood to be the author's individual point of view and not that of Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan, its affiliates or its employees. Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan assumes no responsibility for damages to the user's computer system.

Nothing in this policy negates any obligation the student and parent or guardian have to use the instructional computing resources as required in the Use of Instructional Property Agreement ("Agreement") the parent or guardian signed as part of the student's enrollment packet. In the event that this code conflicts with the Agreement, the terms of the Agreement shall prevail.

## **Confidential Communications of Students**

Some oral or written communications between students and school personnel are confidential. Information that is expressed as confidential or received in confidence by a staff member from a student may be revealed to, or by the Head of School or other appropriate authority, including law enforcement personnel, when the health, welfare or safety of the student or other persons is clearly in jeopardy.

## **Class Connect**

- Students should:
- Arrive promptly at the scheduled time for the Class Connect session.
- Wait for whiteboard and microphone privileges which will be assigned at the discretion of the teacher.
- Only communicate regarding direct content of the lesson.
- Be respectful and courteous towards others at all times.
- Always participate and engage in the session (stepping away without the teacher's approval will count as an absence).
- Log in to each session individually.

Please bear in mind that individual teachers may have expectations that are specific to their classrooms.

Parents/guardians should remove their child from a Class Connect session if the student displays offensive behavior or is ill. If you must remove your child from a Class Connect session, please contact the teacher to discuss the situation.

Parents and guardians should keep comments and questions specific to the lesson. Contact your child's teacher about other concerns by phone, email or in person during office hours. Because the lessons are student-centered, only students should be using the microphones during the sessions. Please refrain from coaching your child during Class Connect sessions. The goal of this instructional time is for your child to become an independent learner and critical thinker.

## **Confidentiality**

Every effort is made to maintain the confidentiality of students who attend Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan. Parent/guardian permission is required for a student's name or picture to be displayed in a public manner. Confidential student information is encrypted before being transferred over the internet. The encrypted information can only be decrypted by another party authorized by Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan. Student files are accessible only to authorized employees of Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan who have an interest in the education of its students. Adults and students should not share their Stride-K12 Online School (OLS) username and password with any unauthorized individuals.

Whenever a parent/guardian or teacher believes the security of the OLS has been compromised, the parent can use the tools provided in the OLS to change usernames and passwords. Parents/guardians are advised to avoid using personal information in e-mails. Using the child's first initial rather than full name is preferred.

## **Supplemental Activities**

Parents/guardians seek to provide a fuller education for their child by enriching their child's curriculum with extra activities and family trips. These activities may be logged into the student's daily schedule and counted toward his or her mandatory hours of instruction if the activity directly relates to lesson objectives. It is necessary that the learning coach first discuss their supplemental activities with their students' assigned Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan teacher(s). This discussion must be before notifying the teachers of the hours that will be logged. This ensures that the supplemental activities are recorded in the appropriate area(s) of the curriculum.

## **Medication Policy**

Neither the Board of Directors nor the School Leader shall be responsible for the diagnosis and treatment of student illness. The administration of prescribed medication and/or medically-prescribed treatments to a student during school hours will be permitted only when failure to do so would jeopardize the health of the student, the student would not be able to attend school if the medication or treatment were not made available during school hours, or the child is disabled and requires medication to benefit from his/her educational program.

For purposes of this policy, medication shall include all medicines including those prescribed by a physician and any non-prescribed (over-the-counter) drugs, preparations, and/or remedies and performance-enhancing drugs as defined in AG 2431C. Treatment refers both to the manner in which a medication is administered and to health-care procedures that require special training, such as catheterization.

Before any medication or treatment may be administered to any student during school hours, the Board shall require the written prescription from the child's physician, accompanied by the written authorization of the parent. These documents shall be kept on file in the administrative offices. No student is allowed to provide or sell any type of over-

the-counter medication to another student. Violations of this rule will be considered violations of Policy 5530 - Drug Free Environment and of the Student Discipline Code/Code of Conduct.

Only medication in its original container that is labeled with the date (if a prescription), the student's name, and exact dosage may be administered. Parents, or students authorized in writing by their physician and parents, may administer medication or treatment.

Staff members are to administer medication or treatment only in the presence of another adult, except in the case of an emergency that threatens the life or health of the student. Staff licensed as professional registered nurses are exempt from this requirement.

All staff authorized to administer medication or treatment will receive training on appropriate procedures for administering the medication or treatment. This training shall be provided by qualified individuals with knowledge of the Academy's policy and procedures and knowledge of the administration of medications or treatment.

All medication shall be kept in a locked storage case.

Students who may require the administration of an emergency medication may have such medication in accord with the School Leader's Procedures.

Students may possess and self-administer a metered dose or dry powder inhaler for relief of asthma (or before exercise to prevent onset of asthma symptoms), while at the Academy, on academy-sponsored transportation, or at any academy-sponsored activity in accordance with the Administrative Procedures, if all of the following conditions are met:

- A. There is written approval from the student's physician or other health care provider and the student's parent/guardian (if student is under eighteen (18) to possess and use the inhaler (Form 5330 F1c) and
- B. The School Leader has received a copy of the written approvals from the physician and the parent/guardian. and
- C. There is on file at the student's Academy a written emergency care plan prepared by a licensed physician in collaboration with the student and his/her parent/legal guardian. The plan shall contain specific instructions on the student's needs including what to do in the event of an emergency.

Students with a need for emergency medication may also be allowed to self-possess and self-administer such medication, provided that they meet the same conditions established above. Students who are prescribed epinephrine to treat anaphylaxis shall be allowed to self-possess and administer the medication if they meet the conditions stated above.

Students shall be permitted to possess and self-administer U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved, over-the-counter topical products while on academy property or at an academy-sponsored event provided the student has submitted prior written approval of his/her parent/guardian to the School Leader.

This policy and the Administrative Procedures developed to establish appropriate procedures shall be implemented in such a manner to comply with Academy's obligations and the student's needs under any Individualized Education Plan, Section 504 Plan, or other legally required accommodation for individuals with disabilities.

## **Student Records**



## Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

In order to provide appropriate educational services and programming, the Board of Directors must collect, retain, and use information about individual students. Simultaneously, the Board recognizes the need to safeguard student's privacy and restrict access to student's personally identifiable information.

If the parent or legal guardian of a student provides the Academy with notice that s/he/they have received a participation card issued by the attorney general under the address confidentiality program act, the Academy shall not disclose the confidential address of the student, regardless of any other provision of this policy. The Educational Service Provider, or his or her designee, shall develop a process to ensure that a student's participation in the address confidentiality program act is appropriately noted to avoid disclosure of this information to any person or entity.

Student "personally identifiable information" ("PII") includes, but is not limited to: the student's name; the name of the student's parent or other family members; the address of the student or student's family; a personal identifier, such as the student's social security number, student number, or biometric record; other indirect identifiers, such as the student's date of birth, place of birth, and mother's maiden name; other information that, alone or in combination, is linked or linkable to a specific student that would allow a reasonable person in the school community, who does not have personal knowledge of the relevant circumstances, to identify the student with reasonable certainty; or other information requested by a person who the Academy reasonably believes knows the identity of the student to whom the education record relate.

The Board hereby authorizes collection of the following student records, in addition to the membership record required by law:

- A. observations and ratings of individual students by professional staff members acting within their sphere of competency
- B. information obtained from professionally acceptable standard instruments of measurement such as:
  - 1. interest inventories and aptitude tests
  - 2. vocational preference inventories
  - 3. achievement tests
  - 4. standardized intelligence tests
- C. authenticated information provided by a parent or eligible student concerning achievements and other school activities which the parent or student wants to make a part of the record
- D. verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior patterns
- E. rank in class and academic honors earned
- F. psychological tests
- G. attendance records
- H. health records
- I. custodial arrangements.

In all cases, permitted, narrative information in student records shall be objectively-based on the personal observation or knowledge of the originator.

Student records shall be available only to students and their parents, eligible students, and designated Academy officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the information, or to other individuals or organizations as permitted by law. The term "parents" includes legal guardians or other persons standing in loco parentis (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives, or a person who is legally responsible for the welfare of the child). The term "eligible student" refers to a student who is eighteen (18) years of age or older or a student of any age who is enrolled in a postsecondary institution.

In situations in which a student has both a custodial and a noncustodial parent, both shall have access to the student's educational records unless stipulated otherwise by court order. In the case of eligible students, parents will be allowed access to the records without the student's consent, provided the student is considered a dependent under section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code.

An Academy official is a person employed by the Educational Service Provider as an administrator, supervisor, teacher/instructor (including substitutes), or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); and a person serving on the Board. The Board further designates the following individuals as entities as "school officials" for the purpose of FERPA:

- A. persons or companies with whom the Board has contracted to perform a specific task (such as an attorney, auditor, insurance representative, or medical consultant);
- B. contractors, consultants, volunteers or other parties to whom the Board has outsourced a service or function otherwise performed by the Board employees (e.g. a therapist, authorized information technology (IT) staff, and approved online Educational Service Providers).

The above-identified outside parties must (a) perform institutional services or functions for which the Board would otherwise use its employees, (b) be under the direct control of the Board with respect to the use and maintenance of education records, and (c) be subject to the requirements of 34 CFR 99.33(a) governing the use and re-disclosure of PII from education records.

Finally, a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks (including volunteers) is also considered an "Academy official" for purposes of FERPA provided s/he meets the above-referenced criteria applicable to other outside parties. "Legitimate educational interest" shall be defined as a "direct or delegated responsibility for helping the student achieve one (1) or more of the educational goals of the Academy" or if the record is necessary for the Academy official to perform an administrative, supervisory or instructional task or to perform a service or benefit for the student or the student's family. The Board directs that reasonable and appropriate methods (including but not limited to physical and/or technological access controls) are utilized to control access to student records and to make certain that Academy officials obtain access to only those education records in which they have legitimate educational interest.

The Board authorizes the administration to:

- A. forward student records, including any suspension and expulsion action against the student, on request to a school or school district in which a student of this Academy seeks or intends to enroll upon condition that the student's parents be notified of the transfer, receive a copy of the record if desired, and have an opportunity for a hearing to challenge the content of the record;
- B. forward student records, including disciplinary records with respect to suspensions and expulsions, upon request to a public school or school Board in which a student in foster care is enrolled. Such records shall be transferred within one (1) school day of the enrolling school's request;
- C. provide "personally-identifiable" information to appropriate parties, including parents of an eligible student, whose knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals, if there is an articulable and significant threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals, considering the totality of the circumstances;
- D. report a crime committed by a child with or without a disability to appropriate authorities and, with respect to reporting a crime committed by a student with a disability, to transmit copies of the student's special education records and disciplinary records including any suspension and expulsion action against the student to the authorities and Academy officials for their consideration;
- E. release de-identified records and information in accordance with Federal regulations;

- F. disclose personally identifiable information from education records, without consent, to organizations conducting studies “for, or on behalf of” the Academy for purposes of developing, validating or administering predictive tests, administering student aid programs, or improving instructions; Information disclosed under this exception must be protected so that students and parents cannot be personally identified by anyone other than representative of the organization conducting the study, and must be destroyed when no longer needed for the study. In order to release information under this provision, the Academy will enter into a written agreement with the recipient organization that specifies the purpose of the study. (See Form 8330 F14.) Further, the following personally identifiable information will not be disclosed to any entity: a student or his/her family member’s social security number(s); religion; political party affiliation; voting history; or biometric information.

This written agreement must include:

1. specification of the purpose, scope, duration of the study, and the information to be disclosed;
2. a statement requiring the organization to use the personally identifiable information only to meet the purpose of the study;
3. a statement requiring the organization to prohibit personal identification of parents and students by anyone other than a representative of the organization
4. a requirement that the organization destroy all personally identifiable information when it is no longer needed for the study, along with a specific time period in which the information must be destroyed.

\*While the disclosure of personally identifiable information (other than social security numbers, religion, political party affiliation, voting record, or biometric information) is allowed under this exception, it is recommended that de-identifiable information be used whenever possible. This reduces the risk of unauthorized disclosure.

- G. disclose personally identifiable information from education records without consent, to authorized representatives of the Comptroller General, the Attorney General, and the Secretary of Education, as well as state and local educational authorities. The disclosed records must be used to audit or evaluate a federal or state supported education program, or to enforce or comply with Federal requirements related to those education programs. A written agreement between the parties is required under this exception. (See Form 8330 F16)
- H. request each person or party requesting access to a student’s record to abide by the Federal regulations concerning the disclosure of information.

The Board will comply with a legitimate request for access to a student’s records within a reasonable period of time but not more than forty-five (45) days after receiving the request or within such shorter period as may be applicable to students with disabilities. Upon the request of the viewer, a record shall be reproduced, unless said record is copyrighted, and the viewer may be charged a fee equivalent to the cost of handling and reproduction. Based upon reasonable requests, viewers of education records will receive explanation and interpretation of the records.

The Board shall maintain a record of those persons to whom information about a student has been disclosed. Such disclosure records will indicate the student, person viewing the record, information disclosed, date of disclosure, and date parental/eligible student consent was obtained (if required).

Upon written request by a student’s parent or legal guardian, the Academy shall disclose to the parent or legal guardian any personally identifiable information concerning the student that is collected or created by the Academy as part of the student’s education records.

If the Academy provides any personally identifiable information concerning the student that is collected or created by the Academy as part of the student's education records to any person, agency, or organization, then the Academy shall disclose to the student's parent or legal guardian upon his or her written request:

- A. The specific information that was disclosed.
- B. The name and contact information of each person, agency, or organization to which the information has been disclosed.
- C. The legitimate reason that the person, agency, or organization had in obtaining the information.

This information shall be provided without charge within 30 days after the Academy receives the written request and without charge to the parent or legal guardian.

The Academy is not required to disclose to the parent or legal guardian, even upon written request, any personally identifiable information concerning the student that is collected or created by the Academy as part of the student's education records and is provided to any person, agency, or organization in any of the following situations:

- A. Provision of such information to the Michigan Department of Education or CEPI.
- B. Provision of such information to the student's parent or legal guardian.
- C. Provision of such information to its authorizing body or to an educational management organization with which it has a management agreement.
- D. Provision of such information to or from its intermediate school board or to another intermediate school board providing services to the Academy or its students pursuant to a written agreement.
- E. Provision of such information to a person, agency, or organization with written consent from the student's parent or legal guardian or, if the student is at least age 18, the student.
- F. Provision of such information to a person, agency, or organization seeking or receiving records in accordance with an order, subpoena, or ex parte order issued by a court of competent jurisdiction.
- G. Provision of such information as necessary for standardized testing that measures the student's academic progress and achievement.
- H. Provision of such information that is covered by the opt-out form described above, unless the student's parent or legal guardian or, if the student is at least age 18 or is an emancipated minor, the student has signed and submitted the opt-out form referenced below.

Only "directory information" regarding a student shall be released to any person or party, other than the student or his/her parent, without the written consent of the parent; or, if the student is an eligible student, the written consent of the student, except those persons or parties stipulated by the Board policy and Administrative Procedures and/or those specified in the law.

The Board shall exempt from disclosure directory information, as requested for the purpose of surveys, marketing, or solicitation, unless the Board determines that the use is consistent with the educational mission of the Board and beneficial to the affected students. The Board may take steps to ensure that directory information disclosed shall not be used, rented, or sold for the purpose of surveys, marking, or solicitations. Before disclosing the directory information, the Board may require the requester to execute an affidavit stating that directory information provided shall not be used, rented, or sold for the purpose of surveys, marketing, or solicitation.

## Directory Information

Each year the Educational Service Provider shall provide public notice to students and their parents of the Academy's intent to make available, upon request, certain information known as "directory information." The Board designates as student "directory information":

- A. a student's name;
- B. address (except for students participating in the address confidentiality program act);

- C. telephone number;
- D. participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
- E. date of graduation;
- F. awards received;
- G. honor rolls;
- H. scholarships.

The School Leader will also develop a list of uses for which the Academy commonly would disclose a student's directory information and develop an opt-out form that lists all of the uses or instances and allows a parent or legal guardian to elect not to have his or her child's directory information disclosed for 1 or more of these uses.

Each student's parent or legal guardian will be provided with the opt-out form within the first 30 days of the school year. The form shall also be provided to a parent or legal guardian at other times upon request.

If an opt-out form is signed and submitted to the Academy by a student's parent or legal guardian, the Academy shall not include the student's directory information in any of the uses that have been opted out of in the opt-out form. A student who is at least age 18 or is an emancipated minor may act on his or her own behalf with respect to the opt-out form.

Parents and eligible students may also refuse to allow the Academy to disclose any or all of such "directory information" upon written notification to the Academy.

### **Armed Forces Recruiting**

The Board shall provide United States Armed Forces recruiters with at least the same access to the high school campus and to student directory information (names, addresses, Academy-assigned email addresses (if available) (except for students participating in the address confidentiality program act), and telephone listings of secondary students) as is provided to other entities offering educational or employment opportunities to those students. "Armed forces of the United States" means the armed forces of the United States and their reserve components and the United States Coast Guard.

If a student or the parent or legal guardian of a student submits a signed, written request to the Board that indicates that the student or the parent or legal guardian does not want the student's directory information to be accessible to official recruiting representatives, then the officials of the school shall not allow that access to the student's directory information. The Board shall ensure that students and parents and guardians are notified of the provisions of the opportunity to deny release of directory information.

Public notice shall be given regarding the right to refuse disclosure of any or all "directory information" including to the armed forces of the United States and the service academies of the armed forces of the United States.

A fee, not to exceed the actual costs incurred by the high school, for copying and mailing student directory information under this section, may be charged an official recruiting representative.

Directory information received under armed services authorization request shall be used only to provide information to students concerning educational and career opportunities available in the armed forces of the United States or the service academies of the armed forces of the United States. An official recruiting representative who receives student directory information under this section shall not release that information to a person who is not involved in recruiting students for the armed forces of the United States or the service academies of the armed forces of the United States.

Annually, the Board will notify male students age eighteen (18) or older that they are required to register for the selective service.

Requests to the Academy Records Officer shall be presented on a standardized form developed by the armed forces of the United States requesting access to a high school campus and a time for the access. Requests should bear the signature of the ranking recruiting officer of the armed service making the request.

Whenever consent of the parent(s)/eligible student is required for the inspection and/or release of a student's education records or for the release of "directory information", either parent may provide such consent unless stipulated otherwise by court order. If the student is under the guardianship of an institution, the School Leader shall appoint a person who has no conflicting interest to provide such written consent.

The Board may disclose "directory information" on former students without student or parental consent, unless the parent or eligible student previously submitted a request that such information not be disclosed without their prior written consent.

The Academy shall not sell or otherwise provide to a for-profit business entity any personally identifiable information that is part of a student's education records. This does not apply to any of the following situations:

- A. Providing the information to an educational management organization with which the Academy has a management agreement.
- B. Providing the information as necessary for standardized testing that measures the student's academic progress and achievement.
- C. Providing the information as necessary to a person that is providing educational or educational support services to the student under a contract with the Academy.

The parent of a student or an eligible student has the right to inspect upon request any instrument used in the collection of personal information before the instrument is administered or distributed to a student. Personal information for this section is defined as individually identifiable information including a student or parent's first and last name, a home or other physical address (including street name and the name of the city or town, unless a parent is prohibited from doing so due to a student's participation in the address confidentiality program act), a telephone number, or a Social Security identification number. In order to review the instrument, the parent or eligible students, must submit a written request to the School Leader at least seven (7) work days before the scheduled date of the activity. The instrument will be provided to the parent within two (2) business days of the School Leader receiving the request.

The School Leader shall directly notify the parent(s) of a student and eligible students, at least annually at the beginning of the school year, of the specific or approximate dates during the school year when such activities are scheduled or expected to be scheduled.

This section does not apply to the collection, disclosure or use of personal information collected from students from the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or service for, or to, students or educational institutions, such as the following:

- A. college or other postsecondary education recruitment, or military recruitment;
- B. book clubs, magazines, and programs providing access to low-cost literary products;
- C. curriculum and instructional materials used by elementary and secondary schools;
- D. tests and assessments used by elementary and secondary schools to provide cognitive, evaluative, diagnostic, clinical, aptitude, or achievement information about students (or to generate other statistically useful data for

the purpose of securing such tests and assessments) and the subsequent analysis and public release of the aggregate data from such tests and assessments;

- E. the sale by students of products or services to raise funds for school-related or education-related activities; and
- F. student recognition programs.

The Board may establish online access for the parents or the eligible student to the student's confidential academic and attendance record. To authorize such access, the parents or the eligible student must sign a release. This release shall remind the parents or eligible student that the account and confidential information about the student is only as secure as they keep their account information. Neither the Educational Service Provider nor its employees will be held responsible for any breach of this policy by the parent/eligible student or any unauthorized party.

The Educational Service Provider shall prepare Administrative Procedures to ensure that students and parents are adequately informed each year regarding their rights to:

- A. inspect and review the student's education records;
- B. request amendments if the record is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's rights;
- C. consent to disclosures of personally-identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to unauthorized disclosures allowed by the law;
- D. challenge the Board's noncompliance with a parent's request to amend the records through a hearing;
- E. file a complaint with the United States Department of Education;
- F. obtain a copy of the Board's policy and Administrative Procedures on student records;

The Educational Service Provider shall also develop procedural guidelines for:

- A. the proper storage and retention of records including a list of the type and location of records;
- B. informing employees of the Federal and State laws concerning student records.

The Board authorizes the use of the microfilm process or electromagnetic processes of reproduction for the recording, filing, maintaining, and preserving of records.

No liability shall attach to any member, officer, or Educational Service Provider employees of this Academy specifically as a consequence of permitting access or furnishing student records in accordance with this policy and regulations. Any entity receiving personally identifiable information pursuant to a study, audit, evaluation or enforcement/compliance activity must comply with all FERPA regulations. Further, such an entity must enter into a written contract with the Board of Directors delineating its responsibilities in safeguarding the disclosed information.

Specifically, the entity must demonstrate the existence of a sound data security plan or data stewardship program, and must also provide assurances that the personally identifiable information will not be re-disclosed without prior authorization from the Board. Further, the entity conducting the study, audit, evaluation or enforcement/compliance activity is required to destroy the disclosed information once it is no longer needed or when the timeframe for the activity has ended, as specified in its written agreement with the Board of Directors. See Form 8330 F14 and Form 8330 F16 for additional contract requirements.

### **Personal Belief Protection Policy**

The Board of Directors respects the privacy rights of parents and their children. Without prior written consent of the student, (if an adult or an emancipated minor) or his/her parents (if an un-emancipated minor), no student shall be required, as a part of the Academy program or the Academy's curriculum, to submit to or participate in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning the following:

- A. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or his/her parents;

- B. mental or psychological problems of the student or his/her family;
- C. sexual behavior or attitudes;
- D. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- E. critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- F. legally recognized privileged and analogous relationships, such as those with lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- G. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or his/her parents; or
- H. income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such a program).

Upon request, parents shall have the right to inspect a survey or evaluation created by a third party before the survey/evaluation is administered or distributed by the Academy to the student. The parent shall have access to the survey/evaluation within a reasonable period of time after the request is received by the School Leader.

### **Advanced Learners Program**

The Advanced Learners Program (ALP) is a supplemental enrichment program for K-8 students who are one or more grade levels ahead of their age-appropriate grade level in a core subject, have been identified as gifted through a previous program, and/or are recommended to the program by their teacher or parents/guardian(s). Students in the ALP are supported with accelerated course planning, topic enrichment, and other activities and instructional strategies that include invitations to National Learning Circles. Participants in the ALP are expected to maintain adequate progress and achievement. If you feel that your child would benefit from the program, contact your teacher for more information.

### **At-Risk Program**

Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan supports the academic achievement of all students, particularly those most at risk. The school has a strong commitment to the federally mandated goals of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). It is a priority to build strong parent/guardian/teacher/student relationships and address the specific needs of individual students.

The At-Risk Program at Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan uses an early intervention process to identify and to serve struggling students. This process includes parents/guardians, teachers, and administrators. It uses a multi-tier model of service delivery, problem-solving methods to make decisions, and research-based, scientifically validated interventions/instruction. If a teacher identifies an area of weakness for any student and prescribes intervention strategies and activities supplementing daily curriculum, it is expected that the student would follow the prescribed plan which could include mandatory Live Class Connect sessions. Attendance is expected and student participation required. Additional assignments may be requested, but if a student does not participate, he or she will be subjected to the attendance policy.

### **Homeless Children and Youth Policy**

#### **McKinney-Vento/ Homeless Student Liaison**

Tara Henson

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### **Definitions**

Children who are identified as meeting the Federal definition of "homeless" will be provided a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the same manner as all other students of the Academy. To that end, homeless students will not



be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless. The Academy shall establish safeguards that protect homeless students from discrimination on the basis of their homelessness. The Academy shall regularly review and revise its policies, including school discipline policies that may impact homeless students, including those who may be a member of any of the Protected Classes.

Homeless children and youth are defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, and include children and youth who meet any of the following criteria:

- A. share the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason
- B. live in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to a lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- C. live in emergency or transitional shelters
- D. are abandoned in hospitals
- E. have a primary night time residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, or
- F. live in a car, park, public space, abandoned building, substandard housing<sup>1</sup>, bus or train station, or similar setting

Pursuant to the McKinney-Vento Act, an unaccompanied youth includes a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

### **Services to Homeless Children and Youth**

The Academy will provide services to homeless students that are comparable to other students in the Academy, including:

- A. transportation services;
- B. public preschool programs and other educational programs and services for which the homeless student meets eligibility criteria including:
  - 1. programs for children with disabilities;
  - 2. programs for English Learners (ELs) (i.e., students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP));
  - 3. programs in career and technical education;
  - 4. programs for gifted and talented students;
  - 5. school nutrition programs; and
  - 6. before - and after-school programs.

The Board will appoint a Liaison for Homeless Children who will perform the duties as assigned by the School Leader. Additionally, the Liaison will coordinate and collaborate with the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth as well as with community and school personnel responsible for the provision of education and related services to homeless children and youths.

### **Academy Stability**

Maintaining a stable school environment is crucial to a homeless student's success in school. To ensure stability, the Academy must make school placement determinations based on the "best interest" of the homeless child or youth based on student-centered factors. The Academy must:

- A. continue the student's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness when a family becomes homeless between academic years or during an academic year; and for the remainder of the academic year even if the child or youth becomes permanently housed during an academic year; or
- B. enroll the student in any public school that non-homeless students who live in the attendance area in which the child or youth is actually living are eligible to attend.

When determining a child or youth's best interest, the Academy must assume that keeping the homeless student in the school of origin is in that student's best interest, except when doing so is contrary to the request of the student's parent or guardian, or the student if he or she is an unaccompanied youth. The school of origin is the school the

student attended or enrolled in when permanently housed, including a public preschool. The school of origin also includes the designated receiving school at the next level for feeder school patterns, when the student completes the final grade level at the school of origin.

When determining the student's best interest, the Academy must also consider student-centered factors, including the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety of homeless students and give priority to the request of the student's parent or guardian, or youth (if an unaccompanied youth). The Academy also considers the school placement of siblings when making this determination.

If the Academy finds that it is not in the student's best interest to attend the school of origin or the school requested by the parent or guardian, or unaccompanied youth, the Academy must provide the individual with a written explanation and reason for the determination in a manner and form understandable to the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth. This written explanation will include appeal rights and be provided in a timely manner.

### **Immediate Enrollment**

The Academy has an obligation to remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of homeless students. A school chosen on the basis of a best interest determination must immediately enroll the homeless student, even if the student does not have the documentation typically necessary for enrollment, such as immunization and other required health records, proof of residency, proof of guardianship, birth certificate or previous academic records. The homeless student must also be enrolled immediately regardless of whether the student missed application or enrollment deadlines during the period of homelessness or has outstanding fines or fees.

The enrolling school must immediately contact the school last attended by the homeless student to obtain relevant academic or other records. If the student needs immunization or other health records, the enrolling school must immediately refer the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth to the local liaison, who will help obtain the immunizations, screenings or other required health records. Records usually maintained by the school must be kept so that they are available in a timely fashion if the child enters a new school or Academy. These records include immunization or other required health records, academic records, birth certificates, guardianship records, and evaluations for special services or programs. Procedures for inter-State records transfer between schools should be taken into account in order to facilitate immediate enrollment.

In addition, the Academy will also make sure that, once identified for services, the homeless student is attending classes and not facing barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities, including magnet school, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, online learning, and charter school programs (if available). Additionally, the Academy should consider giving homeless children and youth's priority if there is a waitlist for these schools, programs, and activities.

### **Transportation**

The Academy provides homeless students with transportation services that are comparable to those available to non-homeless students. The Academy also provides or arranges for transportation to and from the school of origin at the parent or guardian's request, or the liaison's request in the case of an unaccompanied youth. Transportation is arranged promptly to allow for immediate enrollment and will not create barriers to a homeless student's attendance, retention, and success. The following procedures also apply subject to a determination of the student's best interest:

- A. If the homeless student moves but continues to live within the area covered by the Academy's charter the Academy is considered the school of origin and the school of residence and, therefore, transportation will be provided or arranged for the student's transportation to or from the school of origin by the Academy.
- B. If the homeless student moves to an area outside of the Academy's charter, though continuing his/her education at the school of origin, the Academy and the public school district in which the student resides

must agree upon a method to apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to the school of origin. If the Academy and the public school district cannot agree upon such a method, the responsibility and costs will be shared equally.

- C. When the student obtains permanent housing, transportation shall be provided to and from the school of origin until the end of the school year.
- D.

The Academy determines the mode of transportation in consultation with the parent or guardian and based on the best interest of the student.

In accordance with Federal law, the above transportation requirements still apply during the resolution of any dispute. The Academy will work with the State to resolve transportation disputes with other Academies. If the disputing Academy is in another State, the Academy will turn to the State for assistance as Federal guidance says that both States should try to arrange an agreement for the Academies.

### **Dispute Resolution**

Homeless families and youths have the right to challenge placement and enrollment decisions. If a dispute arises between a school and a parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth regarding eligibility, school selection, or enrollment of a homeless student, the Academy must follow its dispute resolution procedures, consistent with the State's procedures. If such a dispute occurs, the Academy will immediately enroll the homeless student in the school in which enrollment is sought pending final resolution of the dispute, including all appeals. The student will receive all services for which they are eligible until all disputes and appeals are resolved.

Pursuant to State, Academy and Board of Directors policies, the Academy will provide the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth with a written explanation of all decisions regarding school selection and enrollment made by the Academy or State, along with a written explanation of appeal rights.

The Academy's notice and written explanation about the reason for its decision will include, at a minimum, an explanation of how the school reached its decision regarding eligibility, school selection, or enrollment, including 1) a description of the proposed or refused action by the school, 2) an explanation of why the action is proposed or refused, 3) a description of other options the school considered and why those options were rejected, 4) a description of any other relevant factors to the school's decision and information related to the eligibility or best interest determination such as the facts, witnesses, and evidence relied upon and their sources, and 5) an appropriate timeline to ensure deadlines are not missed. The Academy must also include contact information for the Liaison and the State Coordinator, and a brief description of their roles. The Academy will also refer the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth to the Liaison, who will carry out the dispute resolution process.

The Academy ensures that all decisions and notices are drafted in a language and format appropriate for low-literacy, limited vision readers, and individuals with disabilities. For children and youth and/or parents or guardians who are English learners or whose dominant language is not English, the Academy will provide translation and interpretation services in connection with all phases of the dispute resolution process pursuant to federal laws. The Academy will also provide electronic notices via email if the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth has access to email followed by a written notice provided in person or sent by mail.

### **Public Notice**

In addition to notifying the parent or guardian of the homeless student or the unaccompanied youth of the applicable rights described above, the Academy shall post public notice of educational rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness in each school. In addition, the Academy shall post public notice of the McKinney-Vento rights in places

that homeless populations frequent, such as shelters, soup kitchens, and libraries in a manner and form understandable to the parents and guardians and unaccompanied youths.

### Records

The local liaison will assist the homeless students and their parent(s) or guardian(s) or unaccompanied homeless students in their efforts to provide documentation to meet State and local requirements for entry into school. All records for homeless students shall be maintained, subject to the protections of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Policy 8330, and in such a manner so that they are available in a timely fashion and can be transferred promptly to the appropriate parties, as required. Pursuant to the McKinney-Vento Act, information regarding a homeless student's living situation is not considered directory information and must be provided the same protections as other non-directory personally identifiable information (PII) contained in student education records under FERPA. The Academy shall incorporate practices to protect student privacy as described in AG 5111.01, AG 8330, and in accordance with the provisions of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA).

No Board policy, administrative procedure, or practice will be interpreted or applied in such a way as to inhibit the enrollment, attendance, or school success of homeless children.

## Children and Youth in Foster Care

### Foster Care Liaison

Tara Henson

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The Board of Directors recognizes the importance of educational stability for children and youth in foster care. Further, the Board recognizes these children and youth as a vulnerable subgroup of students in need of safeguards and supports in order to facilitate a successful transition through elementary and secondary education and into college and/or careers. To that end, the Academy will collaborate with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), other Academy's, and the appropriate child welfare agencies to provide educational stability for children and youth in foster care.

### Definitions

Children who meet the Federal definition of "in foster care" will be provided a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the same manner as all other students of the Academy. To that end, students in foster care will not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status. The Academy shall establish safeguards that protect foster care students from discrimination on the basis of their foster care status or other of the recognized Protected Classes (Policy 2260). The Academy shall regularly review and revise its policies, including academy discipline policies that may impact students in foster care.

Consistent with the Fostering Connections Act, "foster care" means 24-hour substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the child welfare agency has placement and care responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, placements in:

- A. foster family homes;
- B. foster homes of relatives;
- C. group homes;
- D. emergency shelters;
- E. residential facilities;
- F. child care institutions; and

G. preadoptive homes.

A child is in foster care in accordance with this definition regardless of whether the foster care facility is licensed and payments are made by the State, tribal or local agency for the care of the child, whether adoption subsidy payments are being made prior to the finalization of an adoption, or whether there is Federal matching of any payments that are made. (45 C.F.R. 1355.20 (a)).

### **Academy Stability**

The Academy shall remove barriers to the enrollment and retention of children and youth in foster care in the Academy. Foster care students shall be enrolled immediately, even if they do not have the necessary enrollment documentation such as immunization and health records, proof of residency or guardianship, birth certificate, academy records, and other documentation.

The Academy shall meet the Title I requirements for educational stability for children and youth in foster care, including those awaiting foster care placement. The Academy shall identify which students are in foster care and shall collaborate with State and tribal child welfare agencies to provide educational stability for these children and youth.

Academy staff will work closely with child welfare agency personnel to develop and implement processes and procedures that include these enrollment safeguards:

- A. a child/youth in foster care shall remain in his/her academy of origin, unless it is determined that remaining in the academy of origin is not in that child's best interest;
- B. if it is not in the child's best interest to stay in his/her academy of origin, the child shall be immediately enrolled in the determined new academy even if the child is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment; and
- C. the new (enrolling) academy shall immediately contact the academy of origin to obtain relevant academic and other records, including the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) if applicable. (ESEA Section 1111(g)(1)(E)(i)-(iii)).

### **Academy of Origin**

The Academy of origin is the academy in which a student is enrolled at the time of placement in foster care. If a student's foster care placement changes, the academy of origin would then be considered the academy in which the child is enrolled at the time of the placement change. A student in foster care shall remain in his/her academy of origin, if it is determined to be in the student's best interest, for the duration of the student's placement in foster care.

When a student exits foster care, the Academy will continue to prioritize the student's educational stability in determining placement, supports, and services deemed to be in the child's best interests.

A student who has exited foster care shall be permitted to remain in the academy of origin until the end of the academy year.

### **Best Interest Determination**

In making the best interest determination, the Academy will follow the guidelines established by MDE and the State or tribal custodial agencies. The Academy shall utilize the prescribed process in conjunction with local custodial agencies in making best interest determinations, and shall make such determination within five (5) academy days of the child's placement in foster care or change in child's living arrangement. Once a determination is made the Academy shall provide the decision in writing to all relevant parties, in collaboration with the appropriate custodial agency. When making decisions regarding educational placement of students with disabilities under IDEA and Section 504, the Academy shall provide all required special educational and related services and supports provided in the

least restrictive placement where the child's unique needs, as described in the student's IEP or Section 504 plan, can be met.

If there is a dispute regarding whether the educational placement of a child in foster care is in the best interest of that child, the dispute resolution process established by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) shall be used.

The Academy's representatives shall collaborate fully in this process, considering relevant information regarding academic programming and related service needs of the child, and advocating for what the Academy believes is in the best interest of the child.

To the extent feasible and appropriate, the child will remain in his/her academy of origin while disputes are being resolved in order to minimize disruption and reduce the possible number of moves between academies. (ESEA Section 1111(g)(1)(E)(i)).

Since the custodial agency holds ultimate legal responsibility for making the best interest determination for the foster child in their care, if the dispute cannot be resolved, the custodial agency will make the final determination. Such final determination will be made within five (5) academy days of the child's placement in foster care or change in the child's living arrangement.

All notifications and reports regarding foster care placement, changes in academy enrollment, transportation services, and changes in the child's living arrangements shall be provided to the affected parties, in writing, in accordance with the forms, procedures, and requirements of the MDE and the State or tribal custodial agencies.

### **Local Point of Contact**

The School Leader shall designate and make public a local point of contact who will perform the duties as assigned by the School Leader. The point of contact shall serve as a liaison to coordinate with child protection agencies, lead the development of a process for making the best determination for a student, facilitate the transfer of records, and oversee the enrollment and regular academy attendance of students in foster care.

### **Records**

The Academy shall provide privacy protections for children and families and shall facilitate appropriate data-sharing pertaining to children in foster care between child welfare and educational agencies, in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Policy 8330 – Student Records.

### **Services to Children and Youth in Foster Care**

Foster care children and their families shall be provided equal access to the educational services for which they are eligible comparable to other students in the Academy including:

- A. educational services for which the student in foster care meets eligibility criteria including services provided under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or similar State and local programs, educational programs for children with disabilities, and educational programs for students with limited English proficiency;
- B. preschool programs;
- C. programs in vocational and technical education;
- D. programs for gifted and talented students;
- E. academy nutrition programs; and
- F. before - and after-academy programs.

## **Transportation Services**

The Academy must ensure that transportation is provided for children in foster care consistent with the procedures developed by the Academy in collaboration with the State or local child welfare agency. These requirements apply whether or not the LEA already provides transportation for children who are not in foster care.

In order for a student in foster care in his/her academy of origin, when in his/her best interest, transportation services shall be provided, arranged, and funded for the duration of the child's placement in foster care. The Academy's transportation services will provide that:

- A. Children in foster care needing transportation to their academies of origin will promptly receive that transportation in a cost effective manner and in accordance with Section 475(4)(A) of the Social Security Act; and
- B. If there are additional costs incurred in providing transportation to the academy of origin, the Academy shall provide such transportation if 1) the local child welfare agency agrees to reimburse the Academy for the cost of such transportation; 2) the Academy agrees to pay for the cost; or 3) the Academy and the local child welfare agency agree to share the cost. (ESEA 1112(c)(5)(B)).

Additional costs incurred in providing transportation to the academy of origin should reflect the difference between what the Academy would otherwise spend to transport a student to his/her assigned academy and the cost of transporting the foster care student to the academy of origin. The Academy will collaborate with the State Education Agency (SEA), other LEAs, and child welfare agencies to pursue possible funding sources and arrangements to deal with transportation costs.

Since foster care placements may occur across Academy, county, or State boundary lines, coordination among multiple agencies may be necessary. The Academy will work with appropriate State and local agencies to address such placement and transportation issues that arise. The Academy shall provide or arrange for adequate and appropriate transportation to and from the academy of origin while any disputes are being resolved.

No Board policy, administrative procedure, or practice will be interpreted or applied in such a way as to inhibit the enrollment, attendance, or academy success of children and youth in foster care.

## **Educational Opportunity for Military Children**

Children of an active duty member of the United States armed services shall be entitled to all of the rights and protections afforded under the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children (Compact).

The intent of this policy is to minimize the potential challenges to educational success for children of military families because of frequent moves and deployment of their parents by:

- A. facilitating the timely enrollment and placement of children of military families in educational and other school programs and activities;
- B. facilitating the on-time graduation of children of military families; and
- C. providing for the uniform collection and sharing of information between and among schools and military families.

## Special Education Services

### Special Education Manager

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Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan's Special Education program meets the individual needs of students by using specially designed instruction with a standards-based curriculum in the virtual environment. Frequent assessment of student progress is necessary. We deliver programming and related services to Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan students at no cost to the parent or guardian. Students with disabilities needing special education must receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). These services conform to the student's Individual Education Program (IEP).

### Services by Disability

Special Education services are collaborative teamwork among the parent/guardian, teachers, and therapists to provide a systematic problem-solving approach for a quality education to each student. All members of the Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan school community believe that varied instructional practices and learning environments benefit all children.

Services by disability area are as follows:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder Visual Impairment
- Hearing Impairment
- Cognitive Impairment
- Severe Multiple Impairments
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Emotional Impairment
- Physical Impairment
- Early Childhood Development Delays
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech and Language Impairment
- Deaf-Blindness
- Other health impairments

### Child Find

HVAM seeks to assure that all of its students with disabilities, including those who are homeless or are wards of the Michigan, and children with disabilities attending private schools, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated; and (ii) A practical method is developed and implemented to determine which children are currently receiving needed special education and related services.

Child find questions are completed by the parent within the online enrollment portal. These questions are asked again during the enrollment approval and placement process.

Once the school year begins, the assigned general education teacher will again query the parent to determine if the student has any academic need. Any student for whom a parent answers that they previously or are currently receiving special education services is immediately referred to the Special Education Manager or designee.



Any special education or evaluation records shared by the parent with the assigned homeroom teacher are forwarded to the special education department at HVAM so that they can be reviewed by the school psychologist and/or Special Education Manager or designee to determine next steps.

For more information regarding Special Education Child Find: <https://tinyurl.com/y94ud65k>

## **IDEA**

The 2007 Amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandate that every school district in the country develop a system to identify children (from birth through age 21), with disabilities, who live in that specific district. Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan will make a concerted effort to identify, to locate and to evaluate children through 21 years of age who enroll in Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan and have a confirmed or suspected disability, in accordance with all federal regulations and state standards. In addition, it shall be the policy of Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan that children with disabilities, as well as their parents/guardians, shall be provided with safeguards as required by law, throughout the identification, evaluation, and placement process and to provide these children with a free, appropriate, public education. For more information regarding IDEA: <https://tinyurl.com/y94ud65k>

## **Special Education Screening**

Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan screens and evaluates children to determine eligibility for special education and related services. We undertake screening activities before referring most children for a multidisciplinary team evaluation. Screening activities consist of the following:

- On-going analysis of the child's response to instruction and performance on statewide and district-wide assessments
- Periodic vision and hearing assessments by the school nurse and review of the results of physical examinations by school or private physicians as mandated by the Michigan Public School Code
- Baseline assessment and analysis of the child's response to individualized academic or behavioral intervention over an extended period. Such intervention-based screening occurs when requested by the child's teacher, parents/guardian(s), or other concerned school personnel.

For information about the dates of various screening activities by Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan, please contact the school directly. Parents or guardians of preschool-age children (three through five) may obtain information about screening activities, or may request a screening of their children by calling or writing their homeroom teacher.

## **Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)**

The MTSS framework consists of three levels or tiers that are fluid and overlapping. The tiers provide various levels of support to students in terms of duration and intensiveness. The more instructional support needed the higher up on the model the student moves. Teachers using MTSS utilize research-based instructional practices, targeted interventions, and curricular enhancements to support students in accomplishing their individual learning goals and include innovative scheduling and resource allocations. Fluidity between the instructional tiers is critical to students' receiving the supports they need. Every student is given an opportunity to meet or exceed proficiency standards by teachers utilizing data in an effective and collaborative decision-making process, which results in differentiating instructional practices for all learners.

## **Commitment to Serve Students**

Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan is committed to the full implementation of ESEA and IDEA. When students with special education needs are given the support necessary for success as outlined by their IEP, we believe they can achieve at the same high standards that are required for all students enrolled in our school. Therefore, we will

ensure that our enrolled students with special education needs will have full access to those curricular offerings aligned to Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCE).

## 504 Service Plan and Child Find

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Under Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and under the Federal Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act, some school-age children with disabilities who do not meet the eligibility criteria may nevertheless be eligible for special protections and for adaptations and accommodations in instruction, facilities, and activities. Children are entitled to such protections, adaptations, and accommodations if they have a documented mental or physical disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in, or access to, an aspect of the school program.

### CHILD FIND: United States Department of Education Guidance

**The process Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan uses to identify students eligible for services under Section 504.**

- Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan uses the same process to evaluate the needs of students under Section 504 as they use to evaluate the needs of students under the IDEA. Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan may use the same process or if the student has a medical condition that is outlined below, a medical process may be used. Highpoint follows the requirements for evaluation specified in the Section 504 regulatory provision at 34 C.F.R. 104.35.

**Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan does not consider "mitigating measures" used by a student in determining whether the student has a disability under Section 504?**

- Beginning January 1, 2009, school districts, in determining whether a student has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits that student in a major life activity, must **not** consider the ameliorating or improving effects of any mitigating or reducing measures that a student is using. This is a change from prior law.
- Congress did not define the term "mitigating measures" but rather provided a non-exhaustive list of "mitigating measures." The mitigating measures are as follows: medication; medical supplies, equipment or appliances; low-vision devices (which do not include ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses); prosthetics (including limbs and devices); hearing aids and cochlear implants or other implantable hearing devices; mobility devices; oxygen therapy equipment and supplies; use of assistive technology; reasonable accommodations or auxiliary aids or services; and learned behavioral or adaptive neurological modifications.
- Congress created one exception to the mitigating measures analysis. The ameliorative effects of the mitigating measures of ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses shall be considered in determining if an impairment substantially limits a major life activity. "Ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses" are lenses that are intended to fully correct visual acuity or eliminate refractive error, whereas "low-vision devices" (listed above) are devices that magnify, enhance, or otherwise augment a visual image.

**Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan understands it must use multiple formulas or scales that measures substantial limitation.**

- Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan's determination of substantial limitation must be made on a case-by-case basis with respect to each individual student. The Section 504 regulatory provision at 34 C.F.R. 104.35 (c) requires that a group of knowledgeable persons draw upon information from a variety of sources in making this determination.

- Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan may and most often will utilize data obtained by a *multi-tier system of supports team, the classroom teacher data reports, a physician's statement, a prior evaluation data, or a previous school's determination.*

**Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan understands there are no impairments which automatically means a student has a disability under Section 504.**

- Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan understands an impairment in and of itself is not a disability. The impairment must **substantially limit** one or more major life activities in order to be considered a disability under Section 504.

**A medical diagnosis cannot suffice as an evaluation for the purpose of providing FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education)**

- Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan does accept a physician's medical diagnosis as one of several data sources, among other sources that are considered in evaluating a student with an impairment or believed to have an impairment which substantially limits a major life activity. Other sources to be considered, along with the medical diagnosis, include aptitude and achievement tests, multi-tier systems of support team recommendation, teacher recommendation, physical condition, social and cultural background, and adaptive behavior. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, require school districts to draw upon a variety of sources in interpreting evaluation data and making placement decisions.

**Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan understands a medical diagnosis of an illness automatically means a student can receive services under Section 504.**

- Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan understands a medical diagnosis of an illness does not automatically mean a student can receive services under Section 504. Further, the illness must cause a substantial limitation on the student's ability to learn or another major life activity. For example, a student who has a physical or mental impairment would not be considered a student in need of services under Section 504 if the impairment does not in any way limit the student's ability to learn or other major life activity, or only results in some minor limitation in that regard.

**Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan may utilize an outside independent evaluation. Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan considers all data brought to a multi-disciplinary committee where the weight of each is determined by a committee.**

- Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan may utilize a Multi-disciplinary committee such as the *multi-tier system of supports team, the classroom teacher data reports, a physician's statement, a prior evaluation data, or a previous school's determination, and* understands the results of an outside independent evaluation may be one of many sources to consider. The Multi-disciplinary committees, such as must draw from a variety of sources in the evaluation process so that the possibility of error is minimized. All significant factors related to the subject student's learning process must be considered. These sources and factors include aptitude and achievement tests, teacher recommendations, physical condition, social and cultural background, and adaptive behavior, among others. Information from all sources must be documented and considered by knowledgeable committee members. The weight of the information is determined by the committee given the student's individual circumstances.

**Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan may use regular education intervention strategies for referring a student for evaluation for services under Section 504.**

- Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan may use regular education intervention strategies to assist students with difficulties in school. Highpoint understands Section 504 requires students referred for an evaluation for possible Section 504 or special education or related aids and services or modification to regular education if the student, because of disability, needs or is believed to need such services.

**Please note the following:**

**If a parent of a student does not wish services to continue, may they withdraw the services?**

- Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan may initiate a Section 504 due process hearing to resolve the dispute if the district believes the student needs the services in order to receive an appropriate education.

**A student who has a disability referenced in the IDEA, but does not require special education services, the student may be eligible for services under Section 504.**

- The student may be eligible for services under Section 504. Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan must determine whether the student has an impairment which substantially limits his or her ability to learn or another major life activity and, if so, make an individualized determination of the child's educational needs for regular or special education or related aids or services. For example, such a student may receive adjustments in the regular classroom.

**Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan view of a temporary impairment, such as a broken leg, arm or other temporary circumstances.**

- Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan understands a temporary impairment does not constitute a disability for purposes of Section 504 unless its severity is such that it results in a substantial limitation of one or more major life activities for an extended period of time. The issue of whether a temporary impairment is substantial enough to be a disability must be resolved on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration both the duration (or expected duration) of the impairment and the extent to which it actually limits a major life activity of the affected individual.
- Congress clarified that an individual is not “regarded as” an individual with a disability if the impairment is transitory and minor. A transitory impairment is an impairment with an actual or expected duration of 6 months or less.

**An impairment that is episodic or in remission may be a disability under Section 504.**

- Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan understands under certain circumstances this may be true. Congress clarified that an impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active. A student with such an impairment is entitled to a free appropriate public education under Section 504.

## **English Language Learner Program**

### **ELL Coordinator**

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The policy of the Board of Directors holds that all students be provided a meaningful education and access to the programs provided by the Academy. Limited proficiency in the English language shall not be a barrier to equal participation in the instructional or extra-curricular programs of the Academy. Therefore, the policy of this Academy holds that those students identified as having limited proficiency in English will be provided additional support and instruction to assist them in gaining English proficiency and access to the educational and extra-curricular programs offered by the Academy.

Students who are identified as English Language Learners through a review of the Home Language Survey or other procedure, will be given the WIDA screener within 10 days of enrollment. If the student has received previous ELL services, the prior year's WIDA scores will be reviewed within 10 days of enrollment. WIDA scores will be reviewed and those students needing support will be provided targeted English as a Second Language support.

All students who are identified as an English Language Learner by the state of Michigan are required to take the state WIDA assessment in February-March each year until the student has achieved proficiency in English and can be exited from the program. Information is available for translation by request. If needed a translator can be used to ensure parent/school communication.

## Flag Salute

A student may refuse to recite the Pledge of Allegiance or salute the flag based on the student's religious conviction or personal belief. A student who declines to participate in this exercise shall stand quietly and respect the rights and interests of classmates who do wish to participate.

## Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan Special Interest Student Clubs

### Academy-Sponsored Clubs and Activities

The Board of Directors believes the goals and objectives of this Academy are best achieved by a diversity of learning experiences, especially those directly related to the curriculum, conducted either inside or outside of the classroom.

Activities directly related to the curriculum shall enable students to explore a wider range of individual interests than may be available in the Academy's courses of study, but are still directly related to accomplishing the educational outcomes for students as adopted by the Board in Policy 2131.

For purposes of this policy, such curricular-related activities are defined as those activities in which the following occur:

- A. the subject matter is actually taught or will be offered;
- B. the subject matter directly concerns the Academy's composite curriculum;
- C. student participation is required;
- D. participation results in a grade.

No such curricular-related activity shall be considered to be under the sponsorship of this Board unless it meets the criteria stated above and has been approved by the School Leader.

Curricular-related activities, (as well as extra-curricular activities not directly related to the curriculum) may be conducted on or off Academy premises by clubs, associations, and organizations of students sponsored by the Board and directed by a staff advisor.

Non-curricular student activities initiated by parents or other members of the community may be allowed. The Board, however, will not do the following:

- A. assume any responsibility for planning, conducting, or evaluating such activities;
- B. provide any funds or other resources;
- C. allow any member of the Academy's staff to assist in the planning, conducting, or evaluating such activities during the hours he/she is functioning as a member of the staff.

A non-Academy-sponsored organization may not use the name of the Academy or any other name which would associate the activity with the Academy.

Students shall be fully informed of the curricular-related activities available to them and the eligibility standards established for participation in these activities. Academy-sponsored activities shall be available to all students who elect to participate and meet eligibility standards. Whenever a student becomes a member of a school-established student group or national organization (e.g., the National Honor Society), in order to remain a member, he/she must continue to meet all of the eligibility criteria and abide by the principles and practices established by the group or organization.

### Non-School Sponsored Student Clubs and Activities

The Board of Directors will not permit the use of School resources and platforms by non-School- sponsored

student clubs and activities or School-sponsored extra-curricular clubs and activities during instructional hours. During non-instructional time, however, no group of students, regardless of the size of the group, will be denied an opportunity to meet on the basis of religion, politics, philosophy, or other basis.

An application for permission for non-School-sponsored student clubs and activities to utilize school resources and platforms shall be made to the Director, who shall grant permission, provided he/she determines the following:

- A. the activity is initiated by students;
- B. attendance at the activity is voluntary;
- C. no agent or employee of the School is promoting, leading, or participating in the activity;
- D. the activity does not materially and substantially interfere with the orderly conduct of instructional activities in the School;
- E. non-School persons are not directing, conducting, controlling, or regularly attending the activity.

A student-initiated group granted permission to hold an activity utilizing the school resources and platforms shall be provided the same rights and access and shall be subject to the same Administrative Guidelines that govern the activities of student organizations sponsored by this Board, except as provided by this policy. Participation in a student-initiated activity must be available to all students who wish to attend and cannot be denied on the basis of a student's gender, religion, race, color, national origin or ancestry, age, disability, height, weight, marital status, social or economic status, and/or any other legally protected characteristic. In addition, there shall be no discrimination on the basis of the religious, political, philosophical, or other content of the speech at the activity.

A professional staff member must be assigned to attend a student-initiated activity in a custodial capacity but shall not participate directly in the activity. No professional staff member shall be compelled to attend a student-initiated activity if the content of the speech at the activity is contrary to his/her beliefs. The Director must take such actions as may be necessary to maintain order and discipline on School premises and to protect the safety and well-being of students and staff members.

The Board will not permit the organization of a fraternity, sorority, or secret society. The Director may exclude non-students from directing, controlling, or attending any such activities of students.

### **Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan Gatherings**

Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan teachers arrange a variety of special gatherings for students and families throughout the year. Attendance is not required; however, these special gatherings provide wonderful opportunities to meet teachers, make new friends, and to talk with fellow parents/guardians about school. Parents/guardians are responsible for the cost of transportation and any other fees. The fees are often negotiated and reduced for our school. Students qualifying under the McKinney Vento Policy may be eligible for transportation support to face to face events including testing and outings.

Time spent on a field trip counts as attendance in the related subject. For example, a trip to a science museum can count as attendance time in science. All gatherings/notices are posted on the School Community Board and/or the online calendar of events.

Any student may attend any outing he or she wishes by submitting an RSVP, if required, to the teacher listed in the outing information. Parents, guardians, or adults who they specify are responsible for supervising children at all times during an outing. Siblings and friends are welcome to attend as well.

All students are expected to wear clothing that is appropriate for school. Clothing that distracts students, disrupts the educational process or poses a health or safety threat to anyone is not acceptable in our school. Parents/guardians may contact the school if further information is needed. All attending children must bring a signed (by parent/guardian) and completed Liability Release Agreement.

The Board recognizes that students attending Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan gatherings may require medication for various reasons. Parents and guardians shall be encouraged to administer medications outside the hours of school gatherings. Parents and guardians shall assume full responsibility for the care of this part of their child's health.

During periods of public health crises, attendees at any face-to-face event may be asked to wear a mask and/or social distance. Please refer to the HVAM Preparedness Plan for specific details to be updated according to current and appropriate Federal and State guidance.

**Please see below for Parent "I Understand Statements" and Signature Page.**

## Learning Coach and Student Compact

(Please print the I Understand Statements for easy reference.)

By completing the acknowledgement form found at the end of this page, parents/guardians confirm that they understand and agree to the contents of this page. The purpose of this section is to set expectations for Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan parents/guardians. Students' success is a primary goal of Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan and that can only be achieved if you, the parent or guardian, are successful. Therefore, it is important that parents of Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan children understand and agree with the following curricular and attendance requirements.

**Please review and acknowledge the statements below here: <https://forms.gle/TAHPPNDRVHXNUEgw9>**

- I understand that my student is enrolled in a public school with attendance requirements that I am expected to meet. The state requirement is 7 hours per day depending on my child's grade level. Students in grades K-12 must complete 1,098 hours of instruction during the course of the school year.
- I accept the responsibility to supervise my student in using the Stride K12 curriculum, and I understand that I am expected to become knowledgeable about it. Any other work accomplished by the student is supplemental to, and does not take the place of, the Stride K12 curriculum lessons.
- Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan does not consider it acceptable to leave a student home alone or unsupervised all day to complete coursework.
- I understand and agree that student progress is an expected part of the Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan program, in addition to the attendance hours logged. Teachers review progress and consider other factors including parental input, when making student advancement decisions. Promotion is based on progress, content mastery, and/or credits earned, not simply attendance.
- I understand and agree that I am expected to follow the guidance and support of a certified teacher in implementing the Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan program with my student.
- I understand and agree that I am expected to participate in scheduled interactions with my student's teacher, and that I must submit work samples when requested by my student's teacher.
- I understand and agree that, as a public school, Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan students are required to participate in state standardized and other testing and that it is my responsibility to transport my student to and from the testing site. My child is expected to participate fully in the testing at his or her grade level. Your participation is critical to HVAM remaining a school option for your child.
- I understand and agree that my child is expected to participate in STAR or other performance/achievement testing.
- I understand and agree that it is my responsibility to secure an internet service provider (ISP) to access the Online School.
- I understand that if I will be without internet for more than 24 hours I will notify my teacher and travel to a location, such as a library, that has internet access. Regular, daily attendance is still expected to meet state attendance guidelines.
- I understand and agree that I must have a working email address and phone number and notify the school if it changes.
- I understand and agree that Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan is a full-time public-school program, and that my child may not be enrolled in any other full-time or part-time public or private school.
- I read and understand Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan policy for all addressed topics found in the Highpoint Virtual Academy of Michigan Handbook/Student Code of Conduct.