

# **WAVE**

## **Wausau Area Virtual Education**

**Empowering 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learners – Anytime . . . Anywhere**

### **2015-2016 Parent / Student Handbook**

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## Welcome to the Wausau Area Virtual Education Program

### Overview

The Wausau School District is dedicated to offering students and families a variety of pathways and learning options to achieve our District mission *to Advance Student Learning, Achievement, and Success*. The Wausau Area Virtual Education (WAVE) program has been developed to provide opportunities for students to choose their time and place of learning, determine the pace at which they approach their subjects, and provide them with the necessary tools to be successful in their skill development

The Wausau Area Virtual Education program enables the Wausau School District to provide online learning options for our students including:

- Relevant courses in flexible locations using an accommodating time schedule
- High quality, interactive courses aligned to state and national standards
- Middle school and high school level curriculum
- More than 70 different course options
- Semester courses for credit deficient students and others unable to successfully participate in a traditional setting
- Advanced Placement (AP) courses not already offered with the Wausau School District
- A solution for schedule conflicts, homebound, home based learners, adjudication, truancy, pre-expulsions, teen parents and other special needs
- Modified rates of learning to accommodate the student – traditional, accelerated or extended
- The experience of online learning in preparation for future training in post-secondary education

The Wausau Area Virtual Education program is in partnership with Wisconsin Virtual School and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. All courses are aligned to national and state standards. Course goals and objectives are available upon request. Students currently enrolled at the Wausau School District Middle and High Schools full-time can enrich their course selection with courses not currently offered at the Wausau School District Middle and High Schools. Courses cannot supplant courses offered on-site. Students in a full-time home-based learning environment have access to all available coursework. All courses are 1or 2 semester courses. All courses are taught by Wisconsin certified teachers.

## **What is Online Education?**

Online learning is an instructional delivery method that is not dependent upon the student and teacher being in the same location. Sometimes called an asynchronous environment it is offered via the Internet. The courses offer a flexible pace, schedule, and location. Students work at their own pace with instruction and support from Wisconsin DPI certified staff that may or may not be Wausau School District teachers. With trained and certified teachers, students get one-on-one attention and communications on an ongoing basis throughout the course. Students get upfront attention from their online instructor and receive support from an assigned Local Education Guide (LEG) from the Wausau School District.

## **Local Resident Advantages**

Residents of the Wausau School District have some advantages attending the WAVE program versus other online programs. Living in the area of your online school allows for access to participation in extracurricular and co-curricular activities, school events, and networking with a peer group. Additionally, students have the support of our technology department, school counseling staff, administration, and pupil services. Students have the option to take elective courses on site at the high school.

## **Local Education Guide and Online Instructor**

A Local Education Guide (LEG) will serve as the local facilitator for the student taking an online course. This facilitator will act as a support system for the online student and as a liaison between the student and online course instructor when problems arise. The student will also have an online instructor who is responsible for monitoring student academic achievement. Students will be able to communicate with the on-line instructor regarding course content by phone or through e-mail. Students can schedule real-time appointments with their online instructor.

## **Student Commitment**

Students must commit to completing any online course taken within the agreed time period. To be considered as a full time WAVE program enrollee, a student must commit to successfully complete at least one grade level per calendar year (5.5 to 6 credits) or to meet the best needs of the student as determined by the online learning team and the student's family. The LEG, in cooperation with the student, online teacher, and parents, will determine if the student will be successful in the online course environment within the first 14 days of the course being started. This placement will be determined by the Wausau School District. If a student drops or decides not to continue the online course within the 14-day limit noted above, courses can be dropped and no academic or monetary penalty will exist. After the initial 14-day period, if a student who drops, fail to complete, discontinues, or fails an online course(s), it will be reflected on their permanent transcript and the parents will be responsible for repaying the Wausau School District the cost of the course(s). It may jeopardize their continued

enrollment in online courses through WAVE, and may necessitate a different educational option for the student. In this case, the District will help the student and parents develop an exit plan from the program.

## **Parent Engagement**

WAVE strongly supports the role of the parent in the educational process of the students. In any online setting, the commitment of the parents to the educational process directly enhances the learning success of the student. Parents are a critical part of the support of their child as an online learner.

Parent participation in the learning process should include:

- Maintaining regular communication with the LEG, and if needed, the teacher.
- Ensuring your child is spending adequate time on the courses and is progressing each day through the prescribed instructional activities.
- Encouraging your child to ask questions of the teacher whenever necessary.
- Following the procedures required for state and course assessments.

## **Enrollment Procedures**

Students must complete an application for the Wausau Area Virtual Education program. Students who are new to the district must also complete student registration materials. Once the application for WAVE has been approved, students and parents will meet with school personnel to develop an individualized program plan.

Secondary Enrollment Options (Grades 6-12):

- Resident of the Wausau School District – student participates full time in the WAVE program. Student takes all classes online. Student is eligible to participate in athletic and co-curricular activities.

***The district has the right to limit the number of students participating in WAVE programming as determined by budgetary parameters.***

## **Special Circumstances**

Students with special education needs should contact the Director of Special Education, Tammy Nyen, at 715-261-0532.

## **Individualized Program Planning**

In order to provide high quality, standards-based curriculum, courses will be provided through the Wisconsin Virtual School. All courses are aligned to national and state standards. Course goals and objectives are available upon request. Students will work with WAVE personnel to develop a yearlong plan that meets Wausau School District Board of Education established criteria for a full-time student and leads to the completion of graduation requirements. If a home-based learner is participating on a part-time basis, parents must file an application for home-based learning with the Department of Public Instruction. Students can expect to spend just as many hours completing an online course as they would complete a course in a traditional setting. Students should plan to spend 6-7 hours per day working on their online courses in order to complete 5.5 to 6 credits per year.

## **Assessments**

Course assessment work is typically completed in the same environment used for course work. It may occasionally be necessary for students to be proctored during a testing period (i.e. AP tests will be proctored at a Wausau School District site on a set date). WAVE students are required to take all state mandated assessments appropriate to their grade including the Badger Exam: 3-8, WKCE, ACT Aspire Early High School Assessment, ACT plus Writing, and ACT WorkKeys. WAVE students will be tested at either a Wausau School District Middle School or Wausau School District High School during the state testing window. Please contact your LEG or WAVE personnel for exact testing dates.

## **On-Site Courses**

Full-time WAVE students who choose to take a face-to face course at either a Wausau School District Middle School or High School will be responsible for their own transportation for any course requiring transportation other than the regularly scheduled resident district transportation. Students are eligible to take any face-to-face course(s) open to their grade level. All prerequisite procedures apply. Students are responsible for all course requirements, attendance policies, and school rules or procedures.

## **Transfer Credits**

Students wishing to transfer credits into the WAVE program from home-based learning should contact the WAVE administrator. Home-based credits will be reviewed by the Education Department and Pupil Services Department to determine applicability. To begin the process, students must provide course work documentation including a copy of the DPI application for home-based education.

## **Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA)**

Students must be enrolled in the district as a full time student to be eligible for WIAA athletic participation. Students will be required to check with the athletic director of their high school of residence regarding their eligibility for WIAA participation.

## **Co-Curricular School Activities**

Students enrolled in the WAVE program may participate in all co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities offered in the District. We are proud to offer a wide variety of extracurricular activities. Our programs are seen as an extension of the classroom. Our desire is that activities can be an enriching and healthful experience in which physical, mental, and social growth is stimulated through academic, athletic, and social organizations. We encourage student participation in these activities.

## **Grading**

All online grades will be based on a 4.0 pt. scale and monitored by the Local Education Guide (LEG). Grades will be used to calculate Grade Point Averages (GPA) and class rank. The following system will be used for calculation of GPAs for grades 6-12:

A = 4.0

B = 3.0

C = 2.0

D = 1.0

F = 0.0

The percentage necessary for each grade is:

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

F = 59% and below

## **High School Graduation Requirements**

Students who attend WAVE program will have the opportunity to receive a Wausau School District diploma. The District awards diplomas to students who have met academic requirements of the District as prescribed by Wausau School District Diploma and Equivalency Certificate Requirements - Policy 5515. In order to graduate with a Wausau School District diploma, a student must satisfy the requirements set out in this policy. The policy requirements are grounded in the District's curriculum and state law requirements applicable to granting a diploma.

A student must earn 23 credits (including required subjects outlined by the respective high school) and be in attendance as a full-time student at that school for a minimum of one semester. These credits must be earned in high school grades (9-12). [Wisconsin Statute 118.33(1)(a)(1)].

**GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS:**

English	4.0 credits
Math	3.0 credits
Science	3.0 credits
Social Studies	3.5 credits
Physical Education	1.5 credits
Health	0.5 credits
Electives	7.5 credits
TOTAL	23.0 credits

\* As part of graduation requirements, all students must satisfy a financial literacy requirement.

### **Online Attendance Requirements**

Students in the WAVE program must meet attendance requirements. Attendance in online programming is performance-based and measured not only by logging into the course(s) but by successful submission of completed coursework, participation in course activities, such as threaded discussions, and communication with the online instructor.

The minimum attendance requirement is to successfully submit coursework to pace for each online course. This means logging in on a daily basis to complete work and submitting required assignments. **A period of inactivity (not logging in to work, no assignment submission) for 5 school days will constitute truancy.** The student and parent(s) will be contacted and truancy proceedings will begin pursuant to Wisconsin statute.

***Not meeting the minimum attendance requirement for any course (or combination of courses if enrolled in more than one course) as outlined above is considered Habitual Truancy and is therefore in violation of Wisconsin’s Compulsory Attendance Statutes 118.15 (1) (a) that require a child attend school regularly until graduation from high school, or until the end of the semester in which he/she turns 18 years of age, or until he/she is excused from attendance by the school board. The student and parent/guardian may be subject to legal sanctions.***

### **Acceptable Computer Use**

Students are responsible for their behaviors and are expected to comply with Wausau School District Acceptable Use of Technology and Internet Safety – [Policy 6500](#). Every parent and student will be asked to sign a form acknowledging their willingness to abide by this policy during the enrollment process.

## **Student Readiness and Commitment**

Students choosing to participate in courses through WAVE need to examine their personal skills and aptitudes for taking a class online. The following attributes will greatly contribute to a student's success:

1. **Self-motivation** - Students must be able to direct their own learning environment, fulfill course requirements, and achieve individual academic success.
2. **Independent learner** - The online environment enables students to learn at their own pace, traditional, extended, or accelerated -- relieving the stress of feeling rushed or pressured and providing enjoyment in the learning process.
3. **Computer literate** - Although it is not necessary to have advanced computer skills, students should possess a working knowledge of e-mail, the Internet, and basic keyboarding and word processing skills.
4. **Time management** - Students must be able to organize and plan their own best "time to learn." There is no one best time for everyone, but the key to learning is to commit the time to learn.
5. **Effective written communication skills** - Students must use electronic e-mail to communicate with their peers as well as the instructors. The ability to write clearly in order to communicate ideas and assignments is very important to student success as well as a means to inform instructors of any concerns or problems.
6. **Personal commitment** - Since there are no bells that begin and end classes, students must have a strong desire to learn and achieve knowledge and skills via online courses. Making a commitment to learn in this manner is a very personal decision and requires a strong commitment to participate in order to achieve academic success.

## **Keys To Success In Online Courses**

Students who are able to demonstrate the following discipline may be more successful at online coursework:

- Schedule time each day to work on the course
- Read all information, view all resources, and be responsible for understanding the information
- Communicate regularly with the online teacher and local education guide
- Work closely with WAVE personnel and LEG to plan appropriate course selection and to communicate needs
- Notify the LEG when planning to be out of town for any period exceeding 2 school days.