ACCESS
VIRTUAL LEARNING

Alabama Connecting Classrooms, Educators, & Students Statewide

POLICY MANUAL
for
PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS AND COUNSELORS

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PREFACE

Welcome to the world of virtual learning with ACCESS (Alabama Connecting Classrooms, Educators, and Students Statewide). With a vision for providing equal access to high quality instruction and a wide range of course options, ACCESS is having a positive impact on students throughout Alabama. We are pleased that all Alabama high schools are able to participate in the ACCESS experience. Your participation will assist you in providing your students with a variety of Advanced Placement (AP), core, and elective courses, and will open doors of opportunity for your students as we collaborate to make the goals of ACCESS a reality.

In addition to specifying the requirements of participating schools, principals, counselors, technology coordinators, and others, this manual identifies general policies for this program as well as those for students enrolled in ACCESS courses. It also provides information on financial benefits for those schools and teachers who provide videoconferencing instruction (VCI) to students in other parts of the state. ACCESS policies for students are included at the end of this manual. We trust you will find this manual useful as you join us in bringing 21st Century technologies to all Alabama students.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS AND COUNSELORS

POLICY ACCEPTANCE

It is the responsibility of the local school principal to access and accept the ACCESS use policy for participating schools in the student registration system (InformationLIVE). Upon acceptance of these policies by the principal, usernames and passwords for students approved for placement in ACCESS courses will be issued.

LOCAL POLICIES

Local school systems should develop policies to govern documentation of student work and assessment, maintain communication with virtual learning staff (ACCESS teacher, SDE, support center), and establish local withdrawal/enrollment policies within SDE ACCESS guidelines.

SUPERVISION

It is the responsibility of the local school principal to ensure that:
- The school abides by all policies governing ACCESS.
- ACCESS and local school/school system policies are followed by students participating in the ACCESS Virtual Learning program and signed Policy Acceptance Forms are on file at the school and available upon request by ACCESS staff. A copy of this form is provided on the last page of the Policy Manual for Students and on the last page of this document.
- Students enrolled in ACCESS courses meet all prerequisites for those courses.
- Students are provided with textbooks and other instructional materials/software needed for courses in which they are enrolled at the beginning of the term.

Training to assist with program implementation will be provided for principals by the regional support centers.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Schools will ensure that counselors are trained in the use of the counselor section of the registration site for ACCESS Virtual Learning and that onsite classroom facilitators receive the training and/or professional development that is required by ACCESS. In addition, onsite classroom facilitators should have the following skills: basic computer literacy, basic e-mail literacy, and the ability to use a fax machine and scanner.
It is recommended that school principals attend training provided by the ACCESS Virtual

Learning regional support centers to gain information pertaining to their roles in the student registration system (InformationLIVE) and to receive detailed information regarding the responsibilities of local school staff.

STUDENT REGISTRATION

Schools will assign staff to register students. This responsibility is most often assumed by the counselor, facilitator, or registrar. It is the responsibility of the local school administrator to designate local school personnel who will be responsible for:
- Handling registration.
- Serving as a main contact person.
- Serving as the counseling representative for the school.
- Obtaining permission from parents for students to take virtual learning courses.
- Verifying enrollment with the SDE as appropriate (to include contacting the regional support center prior to adding a student to a local VCI course).
- Monitoring student progress and behavior in both the physical classroom and the virtual classroom.
- Recording grades in the local school's student information system and/or each student's school record.
- Supervising the printing, distribution, and return of signed student progress reports, if required by the local school system.
- Communicating with the ACCESS teacher on a day-to-day basis.

COUNSELOR RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the local school administrator to assign counselors to register students for ACCESS classes and to follow up with students on progress and grades in these classes. Principals will enroll counselors in the student registration system, InformationLIVE, and ensure that counselors receive their usernames and passwords.

The major responsibilities of the counselor are as follows:
- Attend training provided by the regional support center.
- Provide information regarding ACCESS courses to students and parents.
- Ensure that students meet prerequisite requirements and possess necessary skills prior to registering them for ACCESS courses.
- Provide within one (1) week of enrollment in an ACCESS course, a list of students who are to receive special services to the respective support centers. It is imperative that the list and a copy of the student's individualized plan(s) are received promptly to insure student success.
- Use the ACCESS student registration system to register students for ACCESS courses taught via videoconferencing instruction (VCI) and Web-based instruction (WBI) and to withdraw them from such courses as needed.
- Report technical issues with student registration to the school system technology coordinator and appropriate support center staff/personnel.
- Notify the school administrator and the school system technology coordinator of software downloads needed for specific students and courses. This information is found under the Courses tab in the Web-Based Courses Resource List at http://accessdl.state.al.us/content/Web_Based_Courses_Resource_List_0#overlay-context=courses.

- Monitor student progress and grades.
- Ensure that grades for local students taking ACCESS classes are recorded and documented appropriately on student and school records.
- Average student's grade(s) in the event of a transfer. ACCESS teachers are only responsible for the grades earned in their ACCESS course once the student is enrolled into that course. Any averaging due to transfer grades, etc., is the responsibility of the local school/counselor as the grade granting authority.
- Serve as the main contact person for addressing questions or resolving issues among parents, facilitators, ACCESS staff, and virtual learning teachers.

GRADE REPORTING

Schools will monitor student progress throughout the duration of the course.

It is the responsibility of the local school administration to:
- Ensure that onsite classroom facilitators at receiving sites discuss with each student his or her progress in any ACCESS course being taken at least once per week. Facilitators may request that students print a copy of their grades from the learning management system each week for placement in a folder for review by parents and school administrative staff. The facilitator will work with the teacher to establish the day of the weekly grades check so that the teacher can have the maximum number of submitted assignments graded and recorded.
- Inform the ACCESS teacher of graduating seniors and notify parents when a senior is at risk of failing.
- Ensure the local school designee transfers the semester/term grades to the school's student information system and/or each student's school record. *Note: Grades should not be transferred from InformationLIVE to the school's student information system (iNOW, etc.) until the student's Request Status is marked "Complete" in InformationLIVE.*
- Ensure the onsite classroom facilitators or designees communicate with ACCESS teachers regarding progress reports required by their LEA.

Grades from an ACCESS VCI course section will be calculated following the policies of the sending teacher's school. The sending teacher will provide a copy of the grading policies and course syllabus to students and receiving schools at the beginning of the term in which a course is delivered.

All students in a WBI course section will be graded using the same grading scheme. The teacher will communicate the grading scheme and pacing schedule to the receiving schools and students via the learning management system at the beginning of the term in which a course is delivered.

Each ACCESS one-credit course is divided into two semesters or terms. Student grades are cumulative for each individual semester/term.

Numerical grades shall be assigned by the ACCESS teacher and accepted by the participating high school. Honor points, weighting, and other special considerations will be made, when appropriate, at the discretion of the local school administration [290-3-1-.02 (13) (d) 2 (f)].

At the end of each term/semester, numerical grades will be provided to students' schools for placement on official school records and distribution to students and parents or legal guardians in accordance with local policies. The local school may average the two semester/term grades if a course grade is needed.

WORK IN PROGRESS GRADES (WIP)

Students may be assigned a WIP upon the request of a school administrator or counselor. The request must be submitted using the form found on the ACCESS Website under the Educators tab→Administrator/Counselor. The form should be e-mailed directly to AccessReports@alsde.edu and copied to the school's regional support center.

Students granted WIP status may continue working in a course, and teachers are expected to continue teaching the course until the designated end date.

DROPS/WITHDRAWALS

Students will begin the drop/withdrawal process of an ACCESS course with the local school counselor.

Students who are enrolled in a one-credit course (traditional or block) and who want to drop a course at the end of the first semester should follow the local school's policies and procedures for drops and/or withdrawals.

EXAM EXEMPTION

Students taking ACCESS Virtual Learning courses will follow the semester/final exam exemption policies of their home school. The school administrator or designee will make the final determination concerning student exemptions.

The Exam Exemption Form may be found on the ACCESS website (http://accessdl.state.al.us) under the Educators tab→Administrators/Counselors→Exam Exemption Form. Completed forms (without students' grades) should be e-mailed to the ACCESS teacher and support center prior to the day the school would like to schedule an ACCESS course exam.

If a student fails to take the semester/term exam and was not exempt, the local school counselor, school administrator, or facilitator should immediately contact the ACCESS teacher or regional support center staff to assist the student in rescheduling the exam as soon as possible.

ONSITE CLASSROOM FACILITATORS

Schools will provide facilitators to supervise and assist students and to monitor their behavior in the physical classroom as well as in the virtual classroom. Specific facilitator responsibilities are included in the Policy Manual for Students. Local school systems should develop policies to establish requirements for facilitators. At a minimum, facilitators must be adults approved by the local school who have completed professional development in

online methodology and technical aspects of Web-based instruction through ACCESS and serve as liaisons to online teachers and providers.

Onsite classroom facilitators must have passed mandatory fingerprinting and background checks, have basic computer and e-mail skills, and possess the ability to use a fax machine and a scanner. Onsite classroom facilitators or paraprofessionals in Title I schools must be under the direct supervision of a certified teacher who is in close proximity to the virtual learning classroom.

CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS

Students and educators usually adapt rapidly to the virtual learning format. Many higher education institutions already have standard virtual learning courses. In general, more successful Web-based learners are those who are independent learners, computer literate, and effective communicators. Students should also be interested in the concept of online learning and be willing to ask for help and share virtual learning problems and/or concerns with others.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Schools will ensure that students are respectful of the rights of others, that they behave responsibly in the classroom, and that they properly handle and use all classroom equipment.

It is the responsibility of the local school administration to provide necessary support to maintain discipline in the physical classroom as well as in the virtual classroom. If a situation occurs where disciplinary action is required, it is expected that the local school administration will follow local school board policies as applicable.

COMMUNICATION

It is the responsibility of the student's local school administration to designate a contact person to facilitate all communication among the ACCESS teacher(s), support center personnel, and/or SDE staff as appropriate. The contact person is responsible for coordinating any supplies or equipment needed for courses with support center personnel.

SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS

Teachers will receive a list of students with disabilities who have either an Individualized Education Program (IEP), ELL, or 504 Plan from their regional support center at the beginning of each term. This information should be kept confidential, and teachers must ensure that they meet all teacher responsibilities as outlined in these documents.

The following information is included in the Policy Manual for Students and outlines steps to be followed in the registration and instruction of special needs students in ACCESS courses.

1. Prior to registration for an ACCESS course, the counselor shall contact the student's case manager for a review of the educational needs of the student based on the requirements of the IEP, ELL, or the 504 Plan.

2. If a virtual learning course is determined to be appropriate for the student based on the IEP, ELL, or 504 Plan, and the student takes such a course during the implementation period of the IEP, ELL, or 504 Plan, the local school will be responsible for providing any supplementary aids and services as required in the IEP, ELL, or 504 Plan that are not supported within the WBI or VCI environment and maintaining communication with the ACCESS teacher.
3. Counselors will work with the Special Education case manager to ensure that the IEP, ELL, or 504 Plan is made available immediately to the ACCESS teacher and support center director. The ACCESS teacher must be informed of his or her responsibilities for implementing the IEP, ELL, or 504 Plan.
4. If an ACCESS course is taken by a student receiving special education services during the summer, or any time period not covered by the IEP, neither the local school nor ACCESS will be responsible for providing supplemental aids and services.
5. The ACCESS teacher and support center will maintain confidentiality with all personally identifiable educational records received by storing such records in a secure environment. At the end of the term, any personally identifiable educational records received by the ACCESS teacher or support center director will be shredded.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) COURSES

It is the school's responsibility to ensure that students meet all prerequisite requirements and have access to any supplementary resources (including textbooks) needed for Advanced Placement courses.

Principals and counselors should also make students aware of their option to take AP exams, inform them of available AP exam review materials, notify them of the date for the administration of each exam, and order and administer the exams in accordance with College Board policy.

If in place, local policy regarding exemption of semester/term exams for students taking the College Board AP exam will be followed.

Schools must notify ACCESS teachers and support center staff of such exemptions in accordance with the ACCESS Exam Exemption policy (see page 2).

CREDIT RECOVERY AND CREDIT ADVANCEMENT COURSES

Guidelines for student eligibility in Credit Recovery and Credit Advancement courses may be found on the ALSDE website. Go to ALSDE Graduation Requirements (link: www.alsde.edu/sec/sct/Pages/graduationinformation-all.aspx?navtext=Graduation Information) and click on the individual tabs at the top for more information regarding each course. It is the responsibility of the local schools to ensure that students are eligible to take these specialized courses through ACCESS Virtual Learning.

TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER MATERIALS

It is the responsibility of receiving school systems to provide students with the required textbooks and ancillary materials needed for each virtual learning class. When possible, the

cost of CD and online texts will be built into course development costs at no expense to schools, but this cannot be guaranteed.

Textbooks and other course materials must be available on the starting date of each class. Local school systems having students enrolled in a virtual learning course must adopt the designated textbook (print, online, or CD) at the local level and report this adoption to the Alabama Department of Education's textbook office.

A list of required textbooks for Web-based courses will be provided on the ACCESS Virtual Learning website. Textbooks for videoconferencing courses will be determined by the sending school. Information regarding these textbooks will also be provided on the ACCESS website and updated as courses are revised or as course providers change.

Supplementary materials may be required for some courses. A list of such materials is available to schools and students at http://accessdl.state.al.us under the Courses tab →Web-based Courses Resource List. Schools will be responsible for costs associated with these additional resources. Check the course information available at the same Web address for more information.

Novels required for English classes (if not available in the local school library) will be considered the responsibility of the student.

LAB SAFETY

Labs are required for all science courses. Some of these may be virtual labs; others will be hands-on. Safety precautions must be implemented and adequate facilities must be provided for implementation of programs prescribed by SDE Bulletin(s) [290-3-1-.02-(1) (a)]. The local school will be responsible for implementing all safety precautions, providing adequate facilities, securing the lab facilitator, and providing all required laboratory supplies and equipment for hands-on labs.

TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT

Schools will provide the hardware, software, and other equipment needed by students in virtual learning classes. See the ACCESS Virtual Learning website (http://accessdl.state.al.us) for more information and a complete list of recommended equipment and software specifications.

Sending and receiving schools will provide students enrolled in both WBI and VCI courses with laptops/computers during the scheduled class time.

The local school will also provide technology support for equipment and ensure that software required in ACCESS courses is available to students. Counselors will notify technology support of software downloads as listed in the ACCESS course descriptions found under the Courses tab→Web-based Courses Resource List on the ACCESS website (http://accessdl.state.al.us).

When ACCESS equipment is not otherwise in use, it may be used for educational purposes within the school system, but such use should not prevent the school from offering ACCESS classes to students during any period of the school day.

FINANCIAL BENEFITS FOR SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS – VCI CLASSES

Schools that allow their teachers to deliver VCI courses to other schools during the regular school day (for classes that are taught as a part of a teacher's school instructional duties) will be compensated for the use of student units for class counts. VCI teachers will be paid $75 per student per half credit for course delivery. School systems of VCI teachers will be paid $175 per student per half credit.

No payments will be made to teachers or school systems for course delivery (VCI) to students within the teacher's local school system.

Teacher contracts for one-credit courses will be set up in such a way that the teachers are under contract to teach the entire course, but the pay will be determined by verification from the support center and VCI teacher of each student's completion of 30% of the course by half credit. Stipends to school systems sending VCI courses will be determined in the same manner. Though some students may drop at the end of the first semester, others may add the course for the second semester due to transfers and other legitimate reasons.

GENERAL POLICIES

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCESS TEACHERS

See *ACCESS Policy Manual for Teachers.*

PRESERVICE TEACHERS

Preservice teachers under the supervision of an ACCESS VCI teacher at a local school will not be assigned or given responsibility for an ACCESS VCI class. During the VCI class period, other arrangements must be made for the preservice teacher to teach in a traditional classroom. Exception: If other arrangements cannot be made during the ten (10) consecutive days of preservice teaching required by colleges and universities, the preservice teacher will be permitted to teach only during the required period of time, and only if the certified and highly qualified VCI teacher approves lesson plans in advance and remains in the classroom during the entire class period.

TEACHER MAXIMUM ENROLLMENTS

Teacher Maximum Enrollments – The maximum number of enrollments for an ACCESS teacher to have at any one time during the school year will be as follows: Adjunct teacher – 60 tradition schedule enrollments, 60 VCI enrollments, or 40 block schedule enrollments; full-time (or retired) teacher – 150 tradition schedule enrollments, 150 VCI enrollments, or

100 block schedule enrollments. If a teacher has a combination of enrollment types, the maximum will be determined by taking the traditional schedule enrollments plus the VCI enrollments, plus 1.5 times the number of block enrollments with the total not exceeding the 150 limit for full time and 60 for adjunct. Support centers may choose smaller limits, but these maximums will be enforced by the support centers.

EMPLOYEE BACKGROUND CHECKS

Any ACCESS, support center, or school employee affiliated with the ACCESS Virtual Learning program who has access to students must be fingerprinted and pass a background check. This applies to employees with direct and unsupervised access and to employees with indirect access (such as helpdesk and other support center staff). Support center directors will maintain appropriate documentation for all their ACCESS employees. The Alabama Department of Education ACCESS office will maintain documentation for SDE ACCESS staff.

EXCEPTIONS

Unusual circumstances may warrant exceptions to certain regulations outlined in these guidelines. Exceptions generally will apply to individual students rather than to program requirements. Any exceptions will be subject to usual procedures for exemption through State Superintendent of Education approval.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

All grievances and/or disputes from students or parents will follow the LEA policies, state and federal laws, and *Alabama Administrative Code*.

ACCESS VIRTUAL LEARNING POLICIES FOR STUDENTS

NETIQUETTE/ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP)

General Regulations

Internet access is required for students enrolled in ACCESS Virtual Learning courses taught by both Web-based instruction (WBI) and videoconferencing instruction (VCI). The Internet and other online resources provided by ACCESS Virtual Learning are intended to be used to support the instructional program and further student learning. ACCESS retains the right to monitor all classes, computer usage, and files for compliance with regulations and/or procedures.

Acceptable Use Agreement

Online learning resources, including the Internet, are to be used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the mission of ACCESS Virtual Learning. ACCESS cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information or the appropriateness of any material on the Internet. Therefore, a local Acceptable Use Policy or AUP, signed by both the student and his or her parent or guardian, must be on file with the local school. This agreement shall specify user (student) responsibilities and shall indemnify the local school and the ACCESS program from any damages. By signing, the parent or guardian understands that ACCESS Virtual Learning is not responsible for materials acquired by the student on the Internet, for violations of copyright, user's mistakes or negligence, or any costs incurred by the user.

User Obligations and Responsibilities

The use of e-mail is essential for communication between teachers and students. Students must use computers appropriately, agree to all rules of etiquette established by ACCESS, and sign a statement acknowledging their understanding and acceptance of these rules. These will include the following:

- Students will use ACCESS Virtual Learning and its resources only for purposes related to education. Commercial, political, and/or personal use unrelated to an educational purpose is strictly prohibited.
- Students will use computers with consideration and respect. They are prohibited from accessing, posting, submitting, publishing, or displaying harmful matter or material that is obscene, threatening, disruptive, or sexually explicit; that could be construed as harassment, disparagement, or cyber bullying of others (based on their race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, or political beliefs); or that is intended to annoy, harass, intimidate, disrupt the operation of the program, or interfere with the rights of other students or ACCESS staff.
- Vandalism will result in the cancellation of user privileges. Vandalism includes the intentional uploading, downloading, or creating of computer viruses and/or any malicious attempt to harm or destroy materials, data, or equipment.
- Students will give credit to others whose work is used. Neither Internet content nor the work of WBI or VCI classmates will be cut, copied, or plagiarized. Students will abide by all copyright rules and regulations.

- Students will consider the social consequences of work completed and any programs written in conjunction with classroom assignments.
- Students will communicate via e-mail cautiously and with discretion. ACCESS Virtual Learning reserves the right to monitor any online communication(s) for improper use. Electronic communications and downloaded material, including files deleted from a user's account, may be monitored or read by ACCESS officials or their designees. Student responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Refrain from including information in e-mail messages that is not appropriate for printing or discussion in a public setting. Privacy cannot be assured in e-mail communications.
  - Send no unsolicited e-mail to virtual learning classmates. All e-mail communication among classmates must be course related.
  - Protect the confidentiality of other users' mail or files. Students will not read the mail or files of others and shall not attempt to interfere with another user's ability to send or receive electronic mail, nor shall they attempt to delete, copy, modify, or forge the mail of others.
  - Keep personal account numbers, home addresses, and telephone numbers private and protect and keep secret any passwords issued for course access.
  - Report any communications that are inappropriate or which make them feel uncomfortable to the classroom teacher, facilitator, or other local school officials. Students should exercise caution in supplying information requested in e-mail communications, especially when such e-mails are from adults who ask for personal information, attempt to schedule meetings, or encourage personal contact.
- Students will accept responsibility for any charges incurred for phone usage, line costs, or usage fees incurred as a result of using the Internet for any purpose other than that required as a part of the course taken. ACCESS will assume no responsibility for such charges.
- The use of ACCESS Virtual Learning resources is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use may result in cancellation of those privileges. Students who fail to abide by ACCESS Virtual Learning policies shall be subject to disciplinary action, revocation of the user account, and legal action as deemed appropriate.
- Students will abide by all local, state, and federal laws and policies related to Internet usage. ACCESS administrators will cooperate fully with local, state, and federal officials in the investigation of illegal activities conducted through the use of the Internet.

Students suspected of violating the Netiquette/Acceptable Use Policy will be notified of the suspected violation and given an opportunity to respond. If violations are confirmed, students may be removed from the course, assigned a failing grade, and subjected to other disciplinary and/or legal consequences as determined by local school policies and local, state, or federal authorities.

RESPONSIBLE USE OF ACCESS RESOURCES

All content and resources, digital and otherwise, provided through the ACCESS Virtual Learning Program will be used in adherence to copyright laws and restrictions. Such materials include, but are not limited to, commercial software, copyrighted materials, and/or materials protected by trade secret.

Use of ACCESS resources in an inappropriate manner may result in legal action where appropriate based on local, state, and/or federal law.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Students will be responsible for their own behavior, will properly handle and use all classroom equipment, and will show respect for others in the classroom. Students will:

- Be attentive.
- Actively participate in the learning experience.
- Complete all assigned homework, projects, and assessments on time.
- Have zero tolerance for academic dishonesty.
- Follow all rules established by ACCESS, the school, and the delivery teacher.

In the event the actions of students cause harm to other students or ACCESS staff, the school administrator has the right and responsibility to discipline offenders. If a situation occurs where disciplinary action is required, the local school administration will follow local school board policies as applicable. In most instances, the local school administration and ACCESS Support Center staff will jointly determine appropriate consequences, including the possible removal of a student's ACCESS privileges.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

ACCESS Virtual Learning students must sign a commitment form attesting to academic integrity. A copy of this form is provided on the last page of the student policy manual and on the ACCESS website (http://accessdl.state.al.us) under the Educators tab/ Administrators/Counselors/Student Acknowledgement Page. If a student fails to abide by these policies, the student may be removed from the course, assigned a failing grade, and subject to other consequences as determined by the local school system administrators.

All ACCESS Virtual Learning teachers utilize a variety of technologies to check student work for authenticity. If an instructor confirms that a student has plagiarized work in any manner or used resources not permitted by the instructor, the student will be subject to consequences determined by the local school system.

RIGHT TO PRIVACY

Students will be required to create a unique password that provides access to their WBI courses. Protecting the confidentiality of the password is the responsibility of the student.

ACCESS will not publish or display the names of students, their images, or their coursework on its website, in videos, or in publications without the consent of the students and their parents (guardians).

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), ACCESS will allow access to student records only to those authorized. Authorized personnel include SDE staff, school system and local school professional staff (principal or designee, teacher, facilitator, counselor), support center administrative staff, and others with a legitimate educational or legal interest in students' records.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

To enroll in an ACCESS Virtual Learning course, students must meet one of the following criteria:
- Be currently enrolled in Grades 8-12 in an Alabama public high school.
- Be a special education student in a state correctional facility and registered with an Alabama public high school.

The SDE reserves the right to deny enrollment to students who have been expelled from previous courses due to misconduct or failure to abide by academic integrity or Internet acceptable use policies.

PREREQUISITES

Schools will ensure that students meet the prerequisite requirements for a virtual learning course prior to enrolling a student in a course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All scheduled unit/module and semester/term tests and exams (including pre and post test in Credit Recovery and Credit Advancement) must be proctored by an ACCESS facilitator during the normal school day.

The normal school day shall include night school, summer school, and other scheduled extended day periods as approved by the local school.

All ACCESS courses shall have an adult facilitator approved by the local school who has completed ACCESS professional development in online methodology and technical aspects of WBI and VCI instruction and who serves as a liaison between ACCESS teachers and local students.

TRANSFER CREDIT

Grades for students taking an ACCESS course will be transferred in the same manner as those for any other course taken at the local school level. The receiving school will accept and record on the student's transcript the final term/semester grade assigned by the ACCESS teacher.

EXAM EXEMPTION

Students taking ACCESS Virtual Learning courses will follow the semester/final exam exemption policies of their home schools. The school administrator (or designee) will make the final determination concerning student exemptions.

The Exam Exemption Form may be found on the ACCESS website (http://accessdl.state.al.us) under the Educators tab→Administrators/Counselors→Exam Exemption Form. Completed forms (without students' grades) should be faxed or e-mailed to the ACCESS teacher(s) and support center prior to the day the school would like to schedule an ACCESS course exam.

If a student fails to take the semester exam and was not exempt, the local school counselor, school administrator, or facilitator should immediately contact the ACCESS teacher or regional support center staff to assist the student in rescheduling the exam as soon as possible.

GRADES

At the end of each term/semester, numerical grades will be provided to the student's school for placement on official school records and distribution to students and parents or legal guardians in accordance with local policies.

Numerical grades shall be assigned by the online teacher and accepted by the participating high school. Honor points, weighting, and other special considerations will be made, when appropriate, at the discretion of the local school administration [290-3-1-.02 (13) (d) 2 (f)].

Grades from an ACCESS VCI course section will be calculated following the policies of the sending teacher's school. The sending teacher will provide a copy of the grading policies and course syllabus to students and receiving schools at the beginning of the term in which a course is delivered.

All students in a WBI course section will be graded using the same grading scheme. The teacher will communicate the grading scheme and pacing schedule to the receiving schools and students via the learning management system at the beginning of the term in which a course is delivered.

Each ACCESS one-credit course is divided into two semesters or terms. Student grades are cumulative for each individual semester/term. The local school may average the two grades if a course grade is needed.

DROPS/WITHDRAWALS

Students will begin the drop/withdrawal process of an ACCESS course with the local school counselor.

Students who are enrolled in a one-credit course (traditional or block) and who want to drop a course at the end of the first semester should follow the local school's policies and procedures for drops and/or withdrawals.

STUDENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Communication between ACCESS teachers and students is essential and must be frequent and ongoing. A variety of modes, including e-mail, telephone, discussion boards, Web conferencing, and other appropriate services or tools, may be used by teachers and students to communicate regarding course requirements, expectations, grading, and other issues related to course content and instruction.

SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS

Teachers will receive a list of students with disabilities who have either an Individualized Education Program (IEP), ELL, or 504 Plan from their regional support center at the beginning of each term. This information should be kept confidential, and teachers must ensure that they meet all teacher responsibilities as outlined in these documents.

The following information is included in the Policy Manual for Students and outlines steps to be followed in the registration and instruction of special needs students in ACCESS Courses.

- Prior to registration for an ACCESS course, the counselor shall contact the student's case manager for a review of the educational needs of the student based on the requirements of the IEP, ELL, or the 504 Plan.

- If a virtual learning course is determined to be appropriate for the student based on the IEP, ELL, or 504 Plan, and the student takes such a course during the implementation period of the IEP, ELL, or 504 Plan, the local school will be responsible for providing any supplementary aids and services as required in the IEP, ELL, or 504 Plan that are not supported within the WBI or VCI environment and to maintain communication with the ACCESS teacher.

- Counselors will work with the Special Education case manager to ensure that the IEP, ELL, or 504 Plan is made available to the ACCESS teacher and support center director. The ACCESS teacher must be informed of his or her responsibilities for implementing the IEP, ELL, or 504 Plan.

- If an ACCESS course is taken by a student receiving special education services during the summer, or any time period not covered by the IEP, neither the local school nor ACCESS will be responsible for providing supplemental aids and services.

- The ACCESS teacher and support center will maintain confidentiality with all personally identifiable educational records received by storing such records in a secure environment. At the end of the term, any personally identifiable educational records received by the ACCESS teacher or support center director will be shredded.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) COURSES

It is the school's responsibility to ensure that students meet all prerequisite requirements for an Advanced Placement course. Schools will also provide students with textbooks and any supplementary resources needed for these courses.

School administrators and/or counselors should make students aware of their option to take AP exams, inform them of available AP exam review materials, notify them of the date for the administration of each exam, and order and administer the exams in accordance with College Board policy.

CREDIT RECOVERY AND CREDIT ADVANCEMENT COURSES

Guidelines for student eligibility in Credit Recovery and Credit Advancement courses may be found on the ALSDE website. Go to ALSDE Graduation Requirements (link: www.alsde.edu/sec/sct/Pages/graduationinformation-all.aspx?navtext=Graduation Information) and click on the individual tabs at the top for more information regarding each course. It is the responsibility of the local schools to ensure that students are eligible to take these specialized courses through ACCESS Virtual Learning.

HOMEBOUND STUDENTS

Students who (upon the recommendation of their physician) have been placed on homebound status by their local school system may participate in approved WBI courses upon request and notification to the SDE of student's homebound status by the local school system superintendent. All scheduled unit/module and semester/term test and exams must be proctored in the presence of a facilitator provided by the local school system and meet the requirements identified in the *Alabama Administrative Code*.

School systems will be required to submit documentation from the student's physician and an official exception request from the local school system superintendent to the State Superintendent of Education. If students are approved to receive ACCESS courses at home, it will be the responsibility of the school/school system to determine if adequate Internet access is available and provide a computer and any other equipment needed to ensure successful course delivery.

It is recommended that parents of homebound students attend training provided by the regional ACCESS Virtual Learning support center when possible.

ONSITE CLASSROOM FACILITATORS

Schools will provide facilitators to supervise and assist students. Local school systems shall develop policies to establish requirements for facilitators. At a minimum, facilitators must be adults approved by the local school who have completed professional development in online methodology and technical aspects of Web-based instruction through ACCESS and serve as liaisons to WBI and VCI teachers and providers. They must have passed mandatory fingerprinting and background checks, have basic computer and e-mail skills, and possess the ability to use a fax machine and a scanner. Onsite classroom facilitators or paraprofessionals in Title I schools must be under the direct supervision of a certified teacher who is in close proximity to the virtual learning classroom.

It is the responsibility of the local school administrator to assign personnel to monitor student behavior in the physical classroom as well as in the virtual classroom.

The responsibilities of the Onsite classroom facilitator are as follows:
- Supervise and assist students.
- Monitor academic progress and student behavior in the physical classroom as well as in the virtual classroom.
- Communicate on a day-to-day basis with the ACCESS teacher.
- For Web-based courses, log on to the learning management system each school day to view announcements and track assignments.
- Assist students with minor technology issues.
- Ensure that students remain on task and on pace.
- Ensure the integrity of students' work.
- Support the sending teacher.
- Take attendance and send absentee reports to teachers and school staff daily.
- Provide students with training on the use of e-mails, attaching documents to e-mails, and accessing WBI courses.
- Serve as a resource to the sending teacher.
- Report technical issues to support center staff as well as to the school and/or system technology coordinator.

TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER MATERIALS

It is the responsibility of receiving school systems to provide students with the required textbooks and ancillary materials needed for each virtual learning class. When possible, the cost of CD and online texts will be built into course development costs at no expense to schools, but this cannot be guaranteed.

Textbooks and other course materials must be available on the starting date of each class. Local school systems having students enrolled in a virtual learning course must adopt the designated textbook (print, online, or CD) at the local level and report this adoption to the Alabama Department of Education's textbook office.

A list of required textbooks for Web-based courses will be provided on the ACCESS Virtual Learning website. Textbooks for videoconferencing courses will be determined by the sending school. Information regarding these textbooks will also be provided on the ACCESS website and updated as courses are revised or as course providers change.

Supplementary materials may be required for some courses. A list of such materials is available to schools and students at http://accessdl.state.al.us under the Courses tab→ Web-based Courses Resource List. Schools will be responsible for costs associated with these additional resources. Check the course information available at the same Web address for more information.

Novels required for English classes (if not available in the local school library) will be considered the responsibility of the student.

LAB SAFETY

Labs are required for all science courses. Some of these may be virtual labs; others will be hands-on. Safety precautions must be implemented and adequate facilities must be provided for implementation of programs prescribed by SDE Bulletin(s) [290-3-1-.02-(1)(a)]. The local school will be responsible for implementing all safety precautions, providing adequate facilities, securing the lab facilitator, and providing all required laboratory supplies and equipment for hands-on labs.

TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT

Schools will provide the hardware, software, and other equipment needed by students in virtual learning classes. See the ACCESS Virtual Learning website (http://accessdl.state.al.us) for more information and a complete list of recommended equipment and software specifications.

Sending and receiving schools will provide students enrolled in both WBI and VCI courses with laptops/computers during the scheduled class time.

The local school will also provide technology support for equipment and ensure that software required in ACCESS courses is available to students. Counselors will notify technology support of software downloads as listed in the ACCESS course descriptions found under the Courses tab→Web-based Courses Resource List on the ACCESS website (http://accessdl.state.al.us).

ACCESS VIRTUAL LEARNING STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have read the student policies and agree to abide by these policies as outlined by ACCESS Virtual Learning. These policies include the Right to Privacy/Access to Student Records, Academic Integrity Statement, Code of Conduct/Acceptable Use Policy (AUP), Student/Teacher Communication, Drop/Withdrawal Policy, and all other policies included in the ACCESS Policy Manual for Students.

_____   _____
Student Signature   Date

_____   _____
Parent/Guardian Signature   Date

_____   _____
Parent/Guardian Signature   Date