

# ONLINE LEARNING

## Background

Prairie South School Division (PSSD) recognizes that small schools are challenged to provide a large variety of courses. PSSD also recognizes the diverse needs of students in achieving the course requirements for grade 12 graduation. The online course offerings available through the Prairie South Virtual School helps fulfill a school's course offerings along with meeting the diverse needs of students.

Prairie South Virtual School provides:

- Greater course offerings for small schools
- Flexible courses for students with timetabling conflicts
- Courses for students who are not able to attend school or are home schooled.

## Related Definitions

Adult student – a student is deemed to be an adult student if they are 22 years of age or older at the time of course registration.

Primary school – the physical school in which a student is registered is considered to be their primary school. Students who are registered as home-based education students are primary to PSSD and not to a specific school. Students who are not registered as primary to a physical school within the province and are not designated as home-based education students will be registered as primary to Prairie South Virtual School.

Cooperating Teacher – an adult or adults at a student's primary school, or the parent of a home-based education student, who assumes responsibility for assisting the online teacher in monitoring and supporting the progress of the online student.

Small schools – our K-12 rural based schools.

Invigilation of assessments – an assessment invigilator, assessment proctor or assessment supervisor is an adult, typically the Cooperating Teacher, or Educational Assistant, Library Technician or someone from the board office or another educational institution such as a College or University. The assessment invigilator ensures the student(s) is supervised during the assessment and follows the proper procedures as outlined by the online teacher. Any cost associated with the invigilation of assessments will be the student's responsibility.

## **Procedures**

### **1. Program Characteristics**

- 1.1 Courses will be offered to students through asynchronous and/or synchronous delivery.
- 1.2 It is an expectation that students complete all courses by the end of the semester.
- 1.3 Prairie South Virtual School does not provide modified programming.
- 1.4 Prairie South Virtual School will follow the PSSD school year calendar. Reporting periods for Prairie South Virtual School may not align with a student's primary school.

### **2. Registration and Withdrawal of Students**

- 2.1 Small schools are given a priority registration period prior to ensure course availability for their students. Students registered as primary to a PSSD school, including Prairie South Virtual School, receive second priority registration. Students located outside of PSSD receive third priority registration.
- 2.2 Registration of a student attending a PSSD school must have the permission of the base school principal.
- 2.3 Registration inquiries should be directed to the principal of the Virtual School.
- 2.4 The principal or designate of the student's primary school is responsible for ensuring that the student meets all course pre-requisites before registering a student.
- 2.5 The principal of a student's primary school or their designate, or the parent of home-based education students, must provide official confirmation when students are to be withdrawn from an online course. The withdrawal form located on the Virtual School website must be completed for an official withdrawal.
- 2.6 Withdrawals after the official withdrawal date or drop date on the Virtual School website will result in having the final mark reported on the official transcript.

### **3. Primary School Responsibilities**

- 3.1 Student success in online courses is greatly enhanced by effective local support. All schools enrolling students in an online course must arrange for a Cooperating Teacher for each online student who will remain active in his/her support of each student. There is no expectation that the Cooperating Teacher provide tutoring or course instruction. The name and contact information for the Cooperating Teacher must be supplied upon course registration.

- 3.2 Duties of the Cooperating Teacher are outlined in the Roles and Responsibilities of the Cooperating Teacher and will be shared with each Cooperating Teacher by the Virtual School.
- 3.3 The primary school is responsible for providing online students with any needed RTI support, supports for students with special needs, and academic and guidance counselling. It is the responsibility of the student's primary school or parent of home-schooled students to notify the online teacher of any special needs, considerations or circumstances that may affect a student's success in an online course.
- 3.4 Local schools are to provide any Virtual School student, both primary and secondary to their own school, with necessary academic materials when feasible to do so. For example, a graphing calculator.
- 3.5 For students attending a regular school, within the student's timetable there is a period for the online course. Students should not take an online course in addition to a full schedule.
- 3.6 During the scheduled online time in a regular school, students are to be assigned a quiet location within the school. Students will have access to a computer (workstation or laptop) along with Internet. Attendance is taken during the online course period and the student is supervised by the Cooperating teacher or designate.

#### **4. Student Responsibilities**

- 4.1 Students are responsible for having access, at home and/or at their primary school, to all technical equipment required for their specific online course, including access to the internet, a printer, and a scanner for submitting assignments. If an online course requires a textbook or resource kit, the Virtual School will have these available for loan. A refundable deposit may be required for textbook and/or resource kits.
- 4.2 Regular student participation in an online class, including weekly communication with the online teacher, is a requirement. If circumstances arise that interfere with regular and continual progress, the student or local facilitator is required to inform the online teacher. Unexplained periods of inactivity with no communication between the student and the online teacher will result in an escalating sequence of responses which may lead to the student's withdrawal from the online course.
- 4.3 Online teachers may set deadlines for the submissions of all term work in order to ensure that sufficient time is provided for proper assessments to be completed before the conclusion of the school term.

#### **5. Tuition and Other Fees**

- 5.1 Students living within the Prairie South School Division catchment region and registered as a primary student to a PSSD school will not be assessed tuition fees.

- 5.2 Adult students, defined as age 22 and older at the time the student begins a class, and students not living with the PSSD catchment area and secondary to Prairie South Virtual School will be assessed tuition plus any costs associated with resources.
- 5.3 One half of the total tuition fee will be refunded if a student withdraws prior to the established mid-point of the semester. No refund will be given if a student withdraws after the established mid-point of the semester.
- 5.4 If resources are not returned to Prairie South within 30 days of the completion of the class the school division that the student resides in will be invoiced for the replacement costs.
- 5.5 The Prairie South Virtual School will cover tuition expenses for students taking online courses delivered by another school division or agency if the student is registered as a primary student in the Virtual School by September 30<sup>th</sup> of the school year.
- 5.6 School Divisions who have students registered in the Prairie South Virtual School are responsible for the associated costs of missing or damaged textbooks and/or resource kits.

Reference: Section 85, 87, 176 of the Education Act  
Section 30 Education Regulations

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