



**Tulpehocken Virtual Academy**  
*[www.tulpecyber.org](http://www.tulpecyber.org)*

**Student Handbook**  
**Expect – Believe - Achieve**

**2018-2019**

## What is the Tulpehocken Virtual Academy?

The Tulpehocken Area School District believes that student learning is not confined to the classroom or the school day. Opportunities for learning in today's technologically connected world should be available at all times in many ways. The District also understands the desire of some students and parents to pursue an educational route that could be considered non-traditional but is becoming more prevalent as technology provides more learning opportunities. In an effort to create a culture of educational opportunity within the legal entitlement of a public school education, the Tulpehocken Area School District has created a variety of learning opportunities for students. Many of these courses take place in an online forum and can be accessed from any Internet connection. It is the intention of the District to offer these on-line options for students while ensuring the quality and integrity of curriculum that has exemplified the tradition of excellence our students have enjoyed. Ideally, every student living in the Tulpehocken Area School District will find an opportunity to complete a rigorous and relevant education within the relationship that a community school provides.

To that end, the District has developed the following guidelines to assure that both the individual education of each student and the academic and financial integrity of the district are maintained in this exciting time of change in education. Since the never ending march of technology makes it nearly impossible to anticipate every situation, the District maintains the latitude to make decisions on an individual student basis within the philosophy and guidelines of the District and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

### Providers

The Tulpehocken Area School District utilizes multiple vendors to give each student the support and flexibility needed. Some of the vendors include: Connections, Edgenuity, Virtual High School (VHS), and k12/Fuel Education. Decisions on which vendors will be used for each student will be made by the TVA coordinator based on course requests, IEPs, and other student data.

### Enrollment

Students who want to enroll in TVA courses will meet with Mrs. Barbara Davis or Mrs. Erika Kindoll and/or a guidance counselor. Students/Parents should complete the TVA enrollment form. If approved, the student will then be registered into the appropriate courses.

### Note:

- 1) TVA refers to Tulpehocken Virtual Academy which is used to designate students who are completing courses from home. They receive TVA equipment (laptop and printer/scanner) and are eligible for internet reimbursement if they are taking half of regular schedule of classes (high school: 3 credits or more online; elementary & junior high: 2 more core courses) while at home. If eligible, students in grades 5-12 will utilize their TASD assigned laptop and will transport that laptop between home and school. Students in grades K-4 will be assigned a TVA laptop to use at home.**
- 2) TVB refers to Tulpehocken Virtual Building, which designates students who are completing online courses while still in the physical school building. These students do not receive TVA equipment and are not eligible for internet reimbursement.**

## Paperwork/Forms:

1. Students/parents should complete the Online Course Enrollment form in order to be considered for TVA/TVB. Students should also complete the “Am I a good candidate for TVA?” survey.
  - a. Signatures and approval from a parent/guardian, the guidance counselor, and a principal are required on this form.
  - b. Students may choose to do all classes at home (TVA) or a more blended approach with some classes at home and some traditional classes in the building.
  - c. TVA trial periods may take place here in the building (TVB) for up to 2 weeks or 10 school days or longer to ensure students are able to navigate courses and are successful before starting TVA at home.
  - d. Students can also elect to do online courses in the building (TVB). They also may choose a blended approach with some classes in the traditional classroom.
  - e. Student in each grade level will be expected to take a minimum number of classes
    - i. Elementary students must take the 4 core classes as well as 2 online specials (1 must be PE) or they can attend specials in the building
    - ii. Junior High students will take the 4 core classes as well as Health and PE and 1 special each semester. They can also opt to take Health & PE and specials in the building.
    - iii. High School students will take a minimum of 6.5 credits each year. This can be a combination of online and in the building classes. They must meet the TASD graduation requirement of 26 credits to earn a diploma.
2. TVA students should follow the TASD student handbook. Students and parents will be asked to sign the same acceptance forms as traditional students.
  - a. Students should receive a homeroom packet with traditional beginning of the year information and papers to fill out and return.
  - b. Students will need to complete required health screenings appropriate for their grade level with the school nurse or provide doctor documentation that these were completed.

## Attendance:

3. Students are expected to log in each day that school is in session for the Tulpehocken Area School District. This may be anytime from 12:00 am to 11:59 pm.
  - a. **NOTE New starting 2017-2018:** Log in for attendance will be via “TVA Homeroom”. Students must log in and click “yes” to submit attendance each school day.
  - b. Students are expected to log-in on all TASD school days – we will follow the same calendar including snow days, vacation days, and emergency days.
  - c. If the student is too ill to log in or does not have internet access for the day (due to power issues, ISP issues, etc), the student or parent **must** call or email the TVA coordinator **that**

**same day** just as a traditional student would be required to have a parent call to report a student absence.

- i. Excuse blanks must be scanned/mailed to the TVA coordinator within 3 days in accordance with attendance policy outlined in the student handbook.
  - ii. Unexcused absences will be documented and treated the same as traditional students according to TASS school board policy. Please also read the attached return to the building procedures for TVA students that have accumulated unexcused absences.
- d. If a student has an excused absence, the make-up work policy will be the same as the student handbook (2 days to make up work for every 1 day missed).
- i. Students are responsible to contact their teachers regarding this make-up work and to get back on pace within the time frame mentioned above.
- e. **Students must continue to log in daily for attendance even if they complete their courses early.** Students must continue to log in until their end of year meeting where TVA equipment is collected and next year schedules are discussed during the last few days of school.
4. Students will be required to participate in all state mandated testing (i.e. PSSA testing, Keystone exams) and will meet all graduation requirements including a graduation project for receipt of a diploma.
- a. The TVA coordinator will provide the dates and times for the state tests.

### **Login Information:**

5. Students will have 1 (or more) different username(s) and password(s).
  - a. One each for different vendor depending on courses (Connections, Edgenuity, k12, VHS, Google Classroom).
6. Parents can request a parent account from each vendor to access course content and view grades/progress reports.
  - a. Grades will be posted on Tulpehocken Home Access on a weekly or bi-weekly basis for TVA students in grades 3-12. These grades will be based on the expected work to be completed. If a student is behind pace or has not completed assigned work, the grade may reflect the missing work as 0s.
    - i. At the end of a marking period, if a student is behind pace, the student may be granted a 2 week period to complete missing work/assignments and will receive an "I" for incomplete during this makeup period. *This extension is granted on a case by case basis and is a team decision with all stakeholders involved.* After 2 weeks, the current grade will be entered as the final marking period grade including 0s for any work not completed by this deadline.

- b. Grades will be used for extra-curricular and athletic eligibility.
  - c. Students and parents are responsible to maintain communication with TVA teachers about missing assignments and grade concerns. They are encouraged to be proactive and discuss grades throughout the marking period. If a parent has any questions about grades, they should contact the teacher of the course first, then the TVA coordinator if necessary.
7. Students will be provided with an orientation to online learning. This will be conducted when students receive their login information, schedule, and equipment.
- a. Students will be shown how log in and access their courses.
  - b. Parents will receive information on how to access student grades and attendance information for the vendors as well as how to log into Home Access.
  - c. Each vendor will provide information/video/orientation on how to access features of their system. Students are expected to view/complete each of these before beginning any courses.
    - i. Virtual High School (VHS) courses also have their own orientation course to be completed. This must be completed prior to the start of the course. There is a quiz to be turned in to the TVA coordinator at completion.
8. Students will need to complete all work assigned by the teacher and follow the due dates/pacing given.
9. Time to be spent on schoolwork:
- a. Students are expected to spend approximately:
    - i. 45 minutes per class per day for elementary (K-6) plus additional time for reading/worksheets.
    - ii. 60 minutes per class per day for secondary (7-12).
    - iii. 75 minutes per class per day for Honors or AP level classes.

The estimated time includes assignments, tests, projects, reading, etc. This may vary each day due to illness, assignments, etc. Students should refer to their assignment calendar/pacing guide for each school day.

- b. We expect our TVA teachers to log in once per day (Monday – Friday, not including holidays and weekends) to provide feedback and check messages. Some of the TVA teachers are full time TASD employees who teach during the school day and cannot guarantee to be online during the school day to answer questions.
- c. If you have any questions about a particular course, please email/contact that teacher with exact course/assignment/activity that you have a question about. If you do not hear back in 24 hours, please contact the TVA coordinator.
- d. Complete all work as directed by teachers.

## **TVA equipment:**

10. A laptop computer, printer, and a stipend for an Internet connection will be offered to each TVA full-time family. **If eligible, students in grades 5-12 will utilize their TASD assigned laptop and will transport that laptop between home and school. Students in grades K-4 will be assigned a TVA laptop to use at home.**

- a. It is the responsibility of the student/parent to maintain an Internet service contract with an Internet Service Provider (ISP) for the duration of the school year. High speed Internet service is highly recommended.
- b. An internet stipend will be distributed in June each year. It will cover the months of September – May. A copy of a monthly bill for internet services will be required for reimbursement. The physical address for the service must match the home address of the student.
- c. The stipend will only be provided if the student remains in the TVA program for more than 2 months (or a minimum of 40 school days).
  - i. Students must be enrolled in a minimum of 50% of a regular schedule of classes (a total of 3.0 credits for HS, 2 or more core subjects for elementary or junior high) online at home to be eligible for internet reimbursement. Students must be passing (65% or higher) at least half of their online courses at the time of withdraw (or end of the school year) in order to qualify for the internet reimbursement.
  - ii. Only 1 reimbursement is available per family (residing at the same address).
- d. It should be understood that the parent is responsible to monitor the student while accessing the internet and working on TVA courses.
- e. The laptop and/or printer are TASD property. Please use them for TVA and other educational purposes only.
  - i. Students/Parents can elect to opt in to the TASD insurance for the laptop.
    1. Please see the insurance opt in form for details on the insurance program details.
  - ii. Equipment will be collected during the last week of school. Individual appointments will be set up to return equipment and any other class materials. A checklist and confirmation of the appointment will be sent in May.
  - iii. Please keep all food and drinks away from laptops and printers. Do not expose the laptop to extreme temperatures (hot/cold car, etc). Keep equipment away from pets, smoke, etc.
    1. ***Parents/guardian may be billed for damage/missing equipment; any damage beyond normal wear and tear is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. See insurance opt in form for details on insurance***

*coverage.*

- iv. One complete set of printer cartridges will be provided. Any additional cartridges and paper are the responsibility of the student/parent.
11. Any other education materials provided to the student shall be returned when the students withdraws from TVA or the end of the school year.
    - a. Any textbooks or other T ASD materials must be returned in good condition (normal wear & tear). Parents will be billed for any missing or damaged materials.
    - b. *Note: k12 and Connections materials should be mailed back to k12/Connections as instructed. Any bills for unreturned materials will be passed onto parents/guardians.***

**Announcements:**

12. Students are considered Tulpehocken students can participate in any Tulpehocken activity that would be offered to students of the same grade/program in the building.
  - a. Announcements of assemblies, field trips, etc will be communicated to parents & students. The T ASD and TVA websites will have some announcements of such programs but email and apps like Remind may also be utilized for communication.
  - b. JSHS students can view building announcements using the link from the TVA website.
  - c. Students will need to sign in at the office and let the TVA coordinator know if they will be attending any functions within the building. Students may not stay in the building without staff supervision and approval from the TVA coordinator and/or the building principal.

## **TVA Procedures for Warning and Return to the Building Letters:**

1. When a student is deemed to be unsuccessful in TVA, parent meeting is scheduled and a warning letter is generated for the following reasons:
  - a. The student
    - i. Has not logged in for attendance for a total of 5 days unexcused or 3 consecutive days unexcused.
      1. A total of 10 days or 5 consecutive would result in returning to the building.
    - ii. Is failing 50% or more of classes taken online (or if taking classes using Connections has accumulated more than 15 overdue lessons total for all classes).
      1. This warning letter will give 1 week for student to improve grades above failing or at least a 10% improvement in each class. After 2 weeks, all classes should be 65% or higher. If all classes are not above 65%, students in grades 7-12 will be required to come work in the building until they are all above 65%. Students in grades K-6 would be required to come back to the building to attend regular classes.
2. After a warning has been issued, then a parent meeting is scheduled and a 'return to the building' letter will be generated if any of the following occur:
  - a. The student
    - i. Has not logged in for attendance for a total of 10 days unexcused or 5 consecutive days unexcused.
      2. Is failing 50% or more of classes taken online and has not improved any of these grades to above failing (or at least a 10% improvement for all classes) or grades continue to drop in any of the classes or after 2 weeks, some or all classes are below 65% or if student refuses to come work in the building on classes. (If taking classes using Connections has not reduced the number of overdue lesson to at least 8 or less total over 2 weeks and continues to lower that number going forward).

Student will be expected to return to the building the day after the scheduled parent meeting and accounts for online work will be deactivated if the student does not report to the building as instructed. If students do not return as requested and 10 days of unexcused consecutive absences accrue, a letter would be sent to the student to be dropped from the rolls, if they are 17 years or older. If the student is younger than 17, fines for truancy could be imposed.

Any TVA equipment must be returned within 1 week of notice to return to the building. If not returned, parent/guardian will be billed for the equipment and a referral to the police can occur for the missing equipment.



## Graduation Requirements (Grades 9-12):

All TVA students must meet TASD graduation requirements according to school board policy in order to receive a TASD diploma.

1. All grades 9-12 students must carry a minimum of **6.5** credits per year unless approved by the principal. This may be a combination of TVA and on campus courses. **Students may not take more than 8 total credits in one school year (either all online or a combination of online and traditional classes) unless the student/parent pay for any courses over the 8 credit total.**
2. All students must complete a graduation project according to district guidelines. It is suggested that students begin this process in their freshman year.
3. Students will be required to meet PA Standards for graduation, which may include demonstrating proficiency on Keystone exams and a combination of district assessments and coursework.
4. Dual Enrollment and Advanced Placement courses may be available.

Subject	Credit
English	4.00
Mathematics	3.00
Science*	3.00
Math/Science/Accounting/Business Math**	1.00
Social Studies	4.00
Integrated Arts or Humanities	0.25
Health	0.50
Physical Education (3 yrs x 0.5 cr.)	1.50
Driver Education	0.25
Related Arts Electives ***	1.00
Adv. Computer Applications	0.50
Contemporary Living	0.50
Electives****	6.50
Graduation Project	1.00
<b>Total Minimum Credits for Graduation</b>	<b>26.00</b>

\*Science curriculum must include one (1) year of Biological Concepts; one (1) year of Earth Science or Agriscience; and one (1) year of either Chemistry or Integrated Science.

\*\*This credit may consist of one (1) credit in a math or science course taken in sequence, or one (1) credit in accounting (Accounting I or HACC Accounting), or half (.5) credit HACC College Mathematics for Business that is paired with half (.5) credit in a science elective.

\*\*\*Students are required to take a total of one (1) credit elective in the related arts area(s): (art, music and/or technology education).

***IEP Students:*** *The IEP will specify how the accomplishment of state standards will be adapted to meet the requirements.*

### **Recommended Sequence of Courses by Grade Level**

**\*Students cannot have more than 9 study halls within a 6 day cycle.**

**Students must carry a minimum of 6.5 credits. +**

***Honors classes are available in all core courses.***

Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
English 9	English 10	English 11	English 12
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	Math &/or Science
Biological Concepts	Earth Science	Chemistry or Integrated Science	** Science, Math or Bus. Math elective 1.0 cr.
US History II	World Cultures	Government	Soc. Studies elective & Economics or AP Gov't & Politics or AP Economics
Health/Phys. Ed	Physical Education	Physical Education	
	Driver Education	Contemporary Living	Electives 5.5****
Adv Computer Apps.	Integrated Arts/Humanities		
Electives 1.0  (World Language recommended for Academic students)  ***Related Arts elective 1.0 cr.	Electives 2.0 (World Language recommended for Academic students)	Electives 2.0 (World Language recommended for Academic students)	****(World Language Recommended for Academic students)

\*\*\*\*All academic students should take at least two (2) credits of the same World Language and four (4) credits each of math and science (including Physics).  
+ unless approved by the principal

See the TVA website: [www.tulpecyber.org](http://www.tulpecyber.org) for a list of classes available from TVA providers.

Also see the Program of Studies course catalog for Tulpehocken courses offered in the building – this is available in print at the JSHS Counseling office or online on the JSHS page of the TASD website.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR TVA STUDENTS**

### Emergency School Closing Information

In the event school is closed because of inclement weather or other emergency, you will be contacted through our parent communication program (Instant Connect). An announcement will be made on the local radio and television stations, posted on the Tulpehocken Area School District website at [www.tulpehocken.org](http://www.tulpehocken.org), and on the Tulpehocken Area School District hotline at 610-488-6286.

Parents/guardians are asked not to call the school district for information, but instead utilize one of the sources listed above to retrieve information. Please keep in mind that it is important that changes to your phone number or address be reported to the school immediately so your child's emergency contact information remains current. To change emergency information you can contact your child's school office or our Child Accounting staff at 717-933-4611 x2114.

Radio: Y-102 & WIOV (I-105)

Television: WGAL 8 & WFMZ 69

### Excused Absences for Temporary Periods

The following are examples of excused absences:

1. Religious holidays.
2. Religious instruction-transportation must be provided by parent.
3. Medical, dental, or other health care appointments when requested in writing.
4. Illness or recovery from an accident.
5. Quarantine of the home.
6. Death of an immediate family member or near relative, limited to five (5) days per occurrence (exceptions may be granted by the principal).
7. Required court appearance.
8. Unavoidable family emergencies. Excuses will be reviewed by administrator.
9. State Farm Show – Five (5) days are permitted for students showing animals.
10. Out of school suspension.

Unexcused absences are considered unlawful for students who are of compulsory school attendance age, which is from the time they being first grade (not later than age eight) until the time they reach seventeen years.

### Attendance procedures for Excessive or Unlawful Absence

The Board requires that school-aged students enrolled in the district schools attend school regularly, in accordance with the laws of the state. The educational program offered by this district is predicated upon the presence of the pupil and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation in order for students to achieve academic standards and consistent educational progress. After ten (10) cumulative days of absence, a letter requiring a doctor's note for all future absences will be sent to the parent/guardian. If a doctor's note is not presented within three (3) days of the students return to class, the absence will be declared unexcused or unlawful.

### Educational Trip

Requests by the parent to have their children excused from school for educational trips must be evaluated under the authority of the State Board of Education, Chapter 11, Pupil Attendance, Section 11.26 —Educational Tours and Trips, Not School Sponsored. Failure to get pre-approval

may result in the absences being declared unexcused or unlawful.

1. The maximum of five (5) days permitted may be used for one (1) trip or a few small trips; however, only a total of five (5) days per school year will be allowed. No days may be carried over the following school year.
2. Any days beyond the maximum of five (5) will be considered unexcused or unlawful.
3. A written request for a student to be excused for an educational trip must be submitted to the TVA coordinator no less than ten (10) school days prior to the trip.
4. The following will be taken into consideration by the TVA coordinator in granting permission for the trip: the student's academic standing; the student's attendance record; the effect the absence will have on the student's educational welfare and the exceptionality of the request.
5. Permission may not be granted for trips/tour during the district's standardized testing period, the state's testing periods and the secondary school examination periods.
6. Decision may be appealed to the Superintendent or designee.
7. Students are responsible for contacting teachers and making up missed work and/or assignments.
8. Students shall have two days to complete all past assignments. Completed assignments are due at the beginning of the third day of classes after approved absence for a family trip.

#### Absences and Making Up Work

**If a student is absent, before 11:59 PM a parent/guardian should call 610-488-6286, ext. 1164 to report the absence.** The regulations about making up work shall apply whether the absence is for a special rehearsal, for illness, for representing the school in athletics or music, for religious holidays, or for family trips. In other words, missed work, tests or quizzes shall be made up regardless of the reason for the absence. **Students who are unexcused from school are permitted to make up work missed during their absence, but their grade may be reduced.**

**Excuse blanks signed by the parent/guardian shall be submitted via scan/email to the TVA coordinator within 3 days of the absence. If excuse blank is not received, the absence will be recorded as unlawful/unexcused.**

**It is the student's responsibility, not the teacher's, to initiate the make-up activities.**

Students who know they will be absent from class(s) must email their teacher(s) in advance about missed work. The student has the responsibility for making arrangements with his/her teachers to take care of work, tests, or projects missed because of an excused absence. Unless special arrangements are made with the teacher, the time period is not to exceed double that of the absence. (Example: A student that is absent 2 days must make up the work within 4 days after the absence). Teachers do have the discretion in setting time limits on quiz/test make-up when circumstances warrant more time.

#### Attendance Guidelines

Students between the ages of six and twenty-one years are entitled to a free and appropriate education. Students who are less than seventeen years of age are subject to the compulsory school attendance law, even though expelled, and must attend school.

The responsibility for placing the student in school rests initially with the student's parent or guardian.

Unnecessary absences should be avoided. When the reason for a student's absence is questionable, or when the attendance pattern of a pupil is irregular, a statement from a physician may be required by the TVA coordinator in addition to the excuse blank signed by the parent. Student(s) absent from school due to illness or who have an unexcused/unlawful absence are not to attend or participate in any extracurricular activity, dances or sporting events on the day of absence or any following non-school days.

**When the Berks Career and Technology Center is closed, students are expected to be present at home online. When T ASD is closed and the BCTC is open, students are expected to ride the bus and attend at BCTC.**

### College Visits

Juniors and seniors are encouraged to visit schools they are considering for post- secondary study. Students must present a note signed by a parent/guardian at least one day in advance of the visit. Upon returning, the student must present a card from the college indicating the time and date of the scheduled appointment. Failure to do this will result in an unexcused/unlawful absence and an appropriate disciplinary measure. Seniors may have up to 4 college visits.

### Truancy

Following three (3) days of unlawful absence, parents/guardians shall be notified in writing. School officials shall initiate action against parents/guardians of students who have accumulated in excess of three (3) days of unlawful absences. Chronic truancy could result in loss of driver's license, home visits, and possible failure for the marking period due to missed work.

**A student must be in attendance online in order to attend an after school or evening extra-curricular activity.**

### Truancy Policy

Pennsylvania Act 29 states that a parent/guardian who fails to ensure that their children attend school can be ordered to pay a fine not exceeding \$300.00 and to pay court costs, or be sentenced to complete a parenting education program, or up to six (6) months community service. A parent will not be convicted if they show that they took every reasonable step to ensure attendance of the child at school. A child who is at least 13 years old and fails to attend school, or is habitually truant from school without justification commits a summary offense and may, upon conviction, be sentenced to pay a fine not exceeding \$300.00, community service, or be assigned to an adjudication alternative program. Act 29 also provides that children convicted of the newly created summary offense will be subject to a 90 day suspension of their driving privileges. A second conviction will result in a six (6) month suspension period. Unlicensed youth will be restricted from acquiring these privileges when they apply during the aforementioned period of time.