PAULDING VIRTUAL ELEMENTARY ACADEMY

Virtual Elementary Parent & Student Handbook

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PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Paulding County School District is excited to announce a new online learning opportunity for elementary school students. The new K-5 Paulding Virtual Elementary Academy (PVEA) option is being created in direct response to the feedback we received from parents/guardians in recent surveys. Families need to understand this will NOT look the same as the virtual experience during Spring 2020. The expectations and rigor will mirror face-to-face instruction, and virtual students will have a full school day Monday-Friday. There will be a significant time commitment of parents/guardians to help facilitate and supervise virtual learning for their K-5 student(s).

An online selection form will be issued to parents/guardians on July 6, 2020, with a completion deadline of July 12, 2020, to allow schools and the district to plan appropriately. Please note that the virtual learning commitment is for the **entire semester (minimum 18-weeks).**

Parents/guardians should also note that their child's virtual teacher may not be physically located at the school where they are districted, and if a parent/guardian selects to enroll in face-to-face instruction second semester, their child will most likely have a different teacher. PCSD will be staffing face-to-face and virtual learning with existing Paulding teachers, so as demand for virtual learning changes throughout the year, adjustments to virtual staffing may also become necessary.

The Paulding Virtual Elementary Academy program will provide the following to students:

- A completely online program taught and facilitated by a certified Paulding elementary teacher Monday-Friday between the hours of 8:00AM and 2:30PM
- A combination of video conferencing for interactive instructional lessons, online resources/materials, online assignments, and facilitated instructional support
- Opportunities for participation in instructional video conferencing with teachers
- Online tutoring and support
- Encouragement and monitoring to complete assignments as scheduled
- Parent/teacher communication regarding each student's progress toward grade-level standards
- Student grading that is consistent with the Paulding County School District grading policy. Students/Parents will be able to utilize the normal Parent Portal to view and monitor student academic progress.
- An opportunity to participate in home school (your normal districted elementary school) activities which may include before/after school clubs

Paulding Virtual Elementary Academy requirements:

- Enrollment in the program for a minimum of one semester
- Internet access and appropriate technology device.

Paulding Virtual Elementary Academy student responsibilities:

- Work daily in assigned courses
- Meet daily/weekly instructional expectations
- Participate in online lessons and communicate with teachers through email and video conferences
- Participate in activities as required by the districted school and PCSD
- There are courses that will require students to be on a PCSD campus for proctored local assessments. For example, students may be asked to complete the Reading and Math Inventories at school.
- Students will be required to be on a PCSD campus to take required state assessments which may include Georgia Milestone Assessments.

DISTRICT CALENDAR

July

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

27-31 Pre-planning

August

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

3 – First Day of School

21 Days

September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

2 – Two Hour Early Release
7 – Labor Day
21-25 Fall Break
16 Days

October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

12-16 Parent Conferences (2 hr)
22 Days

November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

3 – District Professional Learning
23-27 Thanksgiving Break
15 Days

December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

18 – Two Hour Early Release
21-31 Holiday Break
14 Days (88 days)

January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

1 Holiday Break
4 – Teacher Workday
5 First Day Second Semester
18 – MLK Holiday
18 Days

February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15*	16*	17*	18*	19*	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

3 – Two Hour Early Release
15-19 - Winter Break/Pres Holiday
15 Days

March

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

12 – Teacher Workday
15-19 Parent Conferences (2 hr)
22 Days

April

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

5-9 Spring Break
17 Days

May

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

28- Last Day of School
28 – Two Hour Early Release
28-29 Graduation Ceremonies
31- Memorial Day
20 Days (92 Days)

June

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

1-2 Post Planning

Approved 7/24/18

- 🟦 Holiday/Schools Closed
- 🟨 Conferences (ALL Levels) Students Dismissed 2 Hour Early
- 🟩 Teacher Workday/Student Holiday
- 🟥 Early Release/All Students Dismissed 2 Hours Early

*Days marked with an asterisk may be used as inclement weather make-up days

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Students should work on all subjects daily as directed by their teacher(s). (4-5 hours of academic work)

Parents should communicate regularly with the virtual instructor regarding their children's progress.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GRADING SCALE INFORMATION

Student report cards also provide information about work habits, conduct, and attendance. Academic grades are issued based on the following scales:

Kindergarten	1st – 5th Grades	6th-12th Grades
X-Exceeds Standard	4-Exceeds Mastery	Very Good/A-90-100
M-Meets Standard	3-Demonstrates Mastery	Good/B-80-89
P-Progressing	2-Progressing toward Mastery	Acceptable/C-70-79
E-Emerging	1-Limited or Minimum Progress	Failing/U or F-Below 70
N-Not Yet Demonstrated		

WITHDRAWAL CRITERIA

1. Appropriate school personnel are authorized to withdraw a student who:
   a. Accumulates 10 unexcused absences per semester.
   b. Fails to maintain appropriate academic progress: This refers to the student's current progress towards grade-level standards at any given time. Any assignment posted by the teacher that is not completed for the appropriate week will be entered into the gradebook as a zero. At minimum, students must be actively working towards mastery for grade-level standards.
2. Appropriate school personnel are authorized to withdraw a student if the superintendent or superintendent's designee has determined the student is no longer a resident of the local school system or is enrolled in a private school or home study program.

GENERAL ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS RULES

1. Excessive absences have a significant impact on students' academic performance. The PCSD shall comply with all requirements of state law, State Board of Education rules, and the Student Attendance Protocol that has been developed by the Student Attendance Protocol Committee. **Board Policy JB.** Attendance will be reported and maintained in Infinite Campus, and parents may monitor their student's attendance in Parent Portal.
2. Students not in attendance during a scheduled video meeting will be considered absent. A student is considered absent if not in the virtual conference room at the appointed start time and/or if he/she does not have the necessary materials to begin class.
3. Students who sign in late to the virtual conference room will be considered tardy.
4. Teachers will manage the first three absences or tardy events to class. On the fourth absent or tardy event, the student will be referred to the local school according to the Student Attendance Protocols.
5. Students who visit the physical school building for completion of specific academic or counselor tasks must be checked in/out through the school office by a parent or other authorized adult. All visits to the physical school building must be approved either by the virtual teacher or by local school administration **no less than 24-hours in advance**. Unapproved/drop-in visitation and non-academic visitation are prohibited.

INTERNET/EQUIPMENT AND ELECTRONIC NETWORK USAGE

Paulding Virtual Elementary students have 24/7 access to the curriculum. Please note:

1. Students are offered the opportunity to enhance their education using the internet and other electronic networks. There is no right to privacy as it relates to information accessed, developed, or used on Paulding County School District computers, networks, and the internet. Paulding County School District employees may monitor or access information from computer workstations at any time. Paulding County School District does not provide electronic mail, off campus internet access, or equipment to students.

2. Paulding County School District takes precautions to prevent access to materials that may be defamatory, inaccurate, offensive, or otherwise inappropriate in the education center setting. On an unregulated network, however, it is impossible to control all material, and a user may discover inappropriate material. Ultimately, the parent/guardian is responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their son/daughter or ward should follow, as the parent/guardian is legally responsible for his/her student's actions. Paulding County School District supports and respects each family's right to decide whether to authorize unsupervised access to the Paulding County School District education center's electronic networks. Any violation of the terms and conditions, outlined on the internet and electronic network usage form, will result in immediate revoking of internet and electronic network privileges and may result in termination from the program.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

There is no charge to participate in Paulding Digital Elementary instruction during the school day. Please note, all prospective Paulding Virtual Elementary students must confirm access to their own device and internet connection during school hours before enrollment in the program.

Students participating in the PVEA are subject to the rules, regulations, and behavioral expectations of the Paulding County School District as defined by Paulding County School District's Board Policy. All students are expected to adhere to both Board Policy and local program rules. These policies and rules will serve as guidelines and are subject to administrative discretion when appropriate.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Parents/guardians and students are asked to sign a form acknowledging their receipt of the Student Code of Conduct. The Student Discipline Codes of Conduct for Elementary, Middle, and High School Students are contained in Regulation JD-R (2) and JD-R (3). The information regarding rules and regulations of this policy are contained in Regulations JD-R (0), JD-R (1), JD-R (2) and JD-R (3).

It is the intention of the Paulding County School District to establish standards for behavior that expect students to respect each other and school district employees, to obey student behavior policies adopted by the Board and to obey student behavior rules established at each school within the district. ***The center's primary goal is to educate, not to punish; however, when the behavior of an individual student comes in conflict with the code of conduct, corrective actions may be necessary for the benefit of that individual and the school as a whole.*** Accordingly, students shall be governed by policies, regulations and rules set forth in the Paulding County School District Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct is effective during the following times and in the following places:

1. At school, on school property, or at school sponsored events at any time
2. Off school grounds at any school activity, function, or event and while traveling to and from such events
3. On vehicles provided for student transportation by the school system and at school bus stops

Students may be disciplined for conduct off campus which is felonious, or which may pose a threat to the school's learning environment or the safety of students and employees.

Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the Code of Conduct and to be supportive of it in their daily communication with their children and others in the community.

As required by the Georgia General Assembly, parents and guardians are encouraged to inform their children on the consequences, including potential criminal penalties, of underage sexual conduct and crimes for which a minor can be tried as an adult.

STANDARDS FOR STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Standards for student behavior are designed to create the expectation that students will behave themselves in such a way so as to facilitate a positive learning environment. The standards are designed to encourage students to respect each other and school district employees, to motivate students to follow student behavior policies adopted by the BOE, and to obey student behavior rules established at each school within this school district.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

1. Demonstrate courtesy with all individuals regardless of circumstances.
2. Behave in a responsible manner, always exercising self-discipline.
3. Actively engage in live video lessons and avoid any behavior that may be distracting to other learners.
4. Prepare for each class by bringing appropriate materials.
5. Meet the Paulding County School District and school standard of grooming and dress when on video conferencing or when physically on campus.
6. Demonstrate positive Digital Citizenship & Safety behaviors
7. Respect the rights and privileges of all students, teachers, and employees of PCSD.
8. Respect the property of others, including Paulding County School District property and facilities.
9. Refrain from committing violations of the Code of Student Conduct.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE PROCESSES

The Code of Conduct (**Board Policy JD)** provides a systematic process of behavioral correction in which inappropriate behaviors are followed by corrective consequences. Disciplinary actions are designed to teach students self-discipline and to help them substitute inappropriate behaviors with those that are consistent with the character traits from Georgia's Character Education Program. Level 1-2 behaviors will follow the outlined process below. Level 3 behaviors will be directly reported to a school administrator.

Due to the nature of the PVEA's format, disciplinary options are limited to conferences and denial (continuation) of access to school district properties including software.

1. First infraction
   - Parent and student notification/warning, documented parent/teacher conference prior to continuation (teacher reports infraction and conference to school counselor and administrator)
2. Second infraction
   - Parent and student notification, parent conference with school counselor or school administrator prior to continuation, and possible denial of access (1 day)
3. Third infraction
   - Parent and student notification, parent/administrator conference prior to continuation, denial of access (1-3 days)
4. Fourth infraction
   - Removal from PVEA and return to the districted public school

Level 3 discipline offenses are serious acts of misconduct including, but not limited to, repeated misbehaviors of a similar nature, serious disruptions of the virtual school environment, threats to health, safety or property and other acts of serious misconduct. Any such misconduct may result in the immediate suspension of the student from the school and/or school-sponsored activities for up to ten (10) school days pending disciplinary investigation of allegations.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Due to the age of K-5 students, parents/guardians are expected to monitor their student's progress regularly and to be actively involved in the behavior support processes designed to promote positive choices and behavior. Parents/guardians must be available for conferences, meetings, or phone calls with teachers and administrators as requested.

AUTHORITY OF THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

The director/principal may undertake the corrective measure or measures that are determined to be in the best interest of the student and the virtual school, including student withdrawal, denial of access, adjustments to a student's schedule, adjustments to the building schedule, and course offerings provided any such action does not violate school board policy.

PROGRAM DETAILS

- All Paulding County School District students in grades K-5 who elect not to attend their zoned school due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic are eligible to apply for admission into the PVEA program.
- Students not currently enrolled in the PCSD, but living in Paulding County, will be allowed to apply for admission through Central Registration and will be enrolled by their districted local school counselor.
- PVEA instruction will include a combination of whole-group video lessons, online resources, and facilitated instructional support.
- PVEA teachers will be available Monday-Friday between the hours of 8:00 AM to 2:30PM for student support and live video instruction. PVEA teachers will determine the daily instructional schedules for their courses in accordance with district and local school guidance.

- Your student may request additional online tutoring support from his/her virtual teacher(s) provided such tutoring can be scheduled between the hours of 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

- Students will have 24/7 access to the Learning Management Systems and course content.

- Each student will receive differentiated instruction to meet elementary school math and literacy benchmarks.

- All students taking classes through PVEA will be required to take any state or district mandated assessments.

CLUBS – EXTRACURRICULAR

Students initially enrolling with PCSD and enrolling into PVEA will have an eligibility status at their districted home school. Each Paulding Elementary School offers a variety of after-school extracurricular and PTA sponsored events. Students are encouraged to interact with their districted school for activities such as:

- Chorus/Drama
- After-School Clubs
- Science Olympiad

- Reading Bowl
- Title 1 Events
- PTA Events/Activities

Please note, there may be limitations for participation in clubs/extracurricular activities contingent upon the individual expectations of each local program.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Students interested in attending PVEA must complete an online application which will be electronically signed by their parent/guardian. This application will be reviewed by their elementary school counselor who will complete the school section of the application and then submit for enrollment consideration. After the application review is complete, the student will be contacted regarding the outcome.

Please note, the application packet must be completed in full before a student will be considered for admission to PVEA. The window for application for Fall 2020 is July 6 - July 12, 2020. After the application is reviewed, students and parents will be notified about admission status.

PROGRAM MODEL

The PVEA is designed to utilize current technology, direct virtual instruction, online resources/software, and teacher support.

Students are expected to maintain 100% attendance while in PVEA as measured by participation in video-based meetings. Students are granted off site access to the curriculum. Pace and academic progress are monitored by the virtual teacher. Students who do not progress adequately in both their participation and their academic progress may be removed from PVEA and returned to the face-to-face learning experience to improve academic outcomes.

The following supports will be offered:
   a. Direct video-based support and instruction
   b. Access to web conferencing and tutoring
   c. Differentiated instruction
   d. Full access to internet-based services and software

Students should:
   a. Be able to remain on pace and progress in mastery of the standards
   b. Have access to adequate technology and internet access from home
   c. Have the ability to communicate via e-mail and by phone

Pacing and academic progress will be evaluated weekly by the PVEA instructors.

Please note that online learning requires a highly-motivated student with good home support. Due to the age and maturity of K-5 elementary students, parents/guardians should plan to regularly monitor their child's progress and participation throughout the instructional day. It is recommended that parents/guardians provide a quiet learning environment with limited distractions and continually monitor their child's engagement and on-task behavior.

Virtual students will only need to attend their districted elementary school (or the elementary school where the virtual learning teacher is located) when they need to take an assessment on campus. The number and frequency of assessments depend on the course and grade-level. PVEA parents/guardians are responsible for transportation to/from the physical locations.

PVEA PARTICIPATION CRITERIA

Students and Enrolling Parent/Guardian must reside within the borders of the Paulding Count School District.

STUDENT/PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Completing an online PVEA application between July 6-13, 2020, and securing off site access to the internet and computer. Students will not be allowed to enroll in PVEA without confirmation of internet and computer access.

Students will be expected to maintain on-line etiquette and Digital Citizenship & Safety consistent with requirements of the PCSD Elementary Student Code of Conduct while participating in PVEA either on site or virtually.

STATEMENT OF PLAGIARISM

Definition of Plagiarism:

Plagiarism in an academic setting occurs when a student uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common knowledge) material without crediting the original author. There are two types of plagiarism:

- Deliberate Plagiarism: The most serious offense, involves a deliberate attempt on the part of a student to pass off as his own the writing or ideas of another person (student, parent, published or unpublished author, et al). It also includes the straight copying or slight paraphrasing of a source that the student attempts to conceal.
- Unintentional Plagiarism: Carelessly or inadequately citing ideas and words borrowed from another source

Both types of plagiarism are serious violations of the principles of academic integrity. **The parents/guardians of elementary students should support their child's efforts through monitoring and guidance; however, parents/guardians should avoid giving their child answers, completing assignments for their child, typing written responses for their child, overly editing the writing of their child, or otherwise doing anything that falsifies the child's mastery of the standards.**

Penalties for Plagiarism:

- A student who has unintentionally plagiarized will not receive a grade until errors are corrected, at which time he/she will receive a grade reduction just as he/she would for any other error. Should a student fail to resubmit the assignment with corrections within five school days, he/she will receive a grade of zero. A pattern of documentation error will be considered as intentional.
- A student who intentionally plagiarizes will receive zero credit for the assignment and will be subject to a disciplinary referral. Grade recovery will not be given.
- A student who allows another student to copy his or her work or assists in the act of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary action.
- A student who allows someone else to complete his/her virtual assignments or assessments will be subject to disciplinary action and may be dismissed from the PVEA.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is the program called?
   Paulding Virtual Elementary Academy (PVEA)

2. Why did the district decide to develop PVEA?
   PVEA was developed to meet the education needs of PCSD students who elect not to return to their home school due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Will there be teachers in the program?
   PCSD will be staffing face-to-face and virtual learning with certified elementary teachers. PVEA is not designed for students to work 100% independently; thus, elementary-aged children need a combination of support and guidance from their parent/guardians along with PVEA's highly-qualified teachers. Virtual elementary teachers will support students by providing video instruction, online content, office hours for tutoring, web conferencing, video support materials, virtual resources, and e-mail/phone contact. Teachers are available during school hours (8:00AM-2:30PM) and students will have an attendance schedule.

4. How many students can participate in the program?
   Program capacity will be determined after the close of the application window.

5. Can homeschool students participate in the program?
   Yes, the students will then be considered students of their districted school for all extra-curricular activities.

6. Will transportation be provided?
   Transportation will not be provided.

7. Can students participate in all after-school activities at their home school?
   Yes, in fact, it is encouraged. Students who participate in PVEA are considered full members of their districted school and may participate in all after school extracurricular clubs and special events at the districted school. Please note that participation is contingent upon expectations of each individual program. Please reach out to the school or club-sponsor with questions.

8. How do students enroll?
   Completion of the online request form located on the district website during the enrollment window.

9. Can students apply after the school year begins?
   Students who apply after the application window will need to establish a documented hardship and program space must be available in the requested courses.

10. Can students withdraw from PVEA and return to their districted school?
    Yes, transfers from PVEA to the districted school will occur at the end of each semester. Students may transfer after the completion of any semester.

11. At what point are students committed to attending PVEA and cannot return to their districted school?
    Students are permitted to return to their districted school within the first 10-days in the PVEA program. After the first 10-days, students will need to remain in digital learning for a minimum of one semester.

12. What are the deadlines and timetables for applying to the PVEA?
    - For the Fall Semester 2020, applications will be accepted from review July 6-12, 2020. Future application dates will be announced for Spring 2021.

13. Will there be full time highly qualified staff to assist the students?
   Yes, we anticipate future growth and will provide state-certified and highly qualified elementary teachers.

14. How often must the students physically attend PVEA or their local elementary school?
   Students are required to attend for proctored assessments and counselor tasks.

15. I have a child with an IEP that receives special education services, can my child attend the Paulding Virtual Elementary School program?
   Yes, as a public school, Paulding Virtual Elementary Academy accepts students with disabilities. Enrollment in Paulding Virtual Elementary Academy is considered a **school choice option**. Special education services will be provided differently in an online environment. Once a student with a disability has been registered with Paulding Virtual Elementary Academy, the Exceptional Students Education Program (ESEP) coordinator will facilitate an IEP to discuss possible amendments to the student's IEP to reflect acceptance into Paulding Virtual Elementary Academy. **We encourage parents to contact the PCSD Student Services Department at 770-443-8030 prior to registering; Student Services can also be reached at: studentservices@paulding.k12.ga.us**

16. What would be an appropriate device to access the computer software and participate in video conferences?
   - Equipment: laptops, chrome books, desktops, tablets, cell phones. Tablets and cellphones work but can be challenging to navigate compared to larger devices.
   - Video Conferencing: Video conferencing works on any internet connected device. If two-way video is desired the internet connected device must have a camera.

17. As a student, is there a minimum amount of time each day that I should expect to spend completing assignments and participating in video conferences?
   Elementary students should expect to spend approximately 4-5 hours per day on instruction, assignments, and assessments.

18. What courses are offered?
   - K-5 Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies.
   - Limited, independent online content for Special Areas and STEM

19. Can my child participate in Chorus at their home school while enrolled in Paulding Virtual Elementary Academy?
   Yes, in most cases. Please contact your child's home school and coordinate with the principal and your student's chorus teacher to determine if this is possible.