Welcome!

Welcome to Sumner Virtual Academy! Sumner County Schools is pleased to provide an alternate method of instructional delivery to families who have selected the need for 100% online learning for their child. The following handbook has been designed to answer questions and provide guidance to the structure and method of delivery for families. As questions may arise about the program, please contact your child's teacher.

Sumner County Schools Shared Vision:

Sumner County Schools is a collaborative culture of high performing students, teachers, and school communities.

Sumner County Schools' Mission Statement:

Sumner County Schools commits to growing learners who are college and career ready through quality instruction, effective use of resources, building a collaborative culture, and strong leadership.

Registration Agreement

The Sumner Virtual Academy will serve as an alternative method of instructional delivery for students Kindergarten through twelfth grade, and students enrolled in this option will receive instruction delivered through an online platform. Assignments and assessments will be regularly assigned through the Google Classroom or the Edgenuity platform. The same expectation regarding high quality instruction following the district's curriculum and pacing will take place at SVA. Kindergarten through eighth grade students will enroll in Sumner Virtual Academy and be committed for nine weeks at a time. High School students (9th-12th grades) will enroll and be committed for the semester.

The Sumner Virtual Academy is also required to monitor student daily attendance in accordance with all applicable state laws, regulations, and local school board policies. Parents/guardians have the legal responsibility to be accountable for their student's attendance under state law. Virtual Academy faculty will monitor violations of the state compulsory attendance laws and report truant students to the proper legal authorities.

Virtual Academy students are required to attend multiple sessions each day and are expected to adhere to all district attendance policies. Attendance is based on participation in online learning sessions and work completed. Failure to attend sessions each day and/or complete lessons assigned by the teacher may result in a student being recorded as absent for the instructional day.

Virtual school enrollees may participate in activities within their school of zone following the TSSAA guidelines.

Parents/guardians and student should understand, acknowledge, and agree to the following:

- The parent/guardian and student are responsible for monitoring student progress in each course and each course must be completed to receive credit;
- The parent/guardian and student are subject to compulsory attendance requirements;
- The student must participate in online sessions each school day and failure to login and/or complete lessons may result in the student receiving an absence for the instructional day;
- Each student will have reliable, daily access to the internet and a computer/device outside of school.
- The student will comply with district policies and will follow the traditional classroom hours and calendar.
- Teachers will provide assignments, provide feedback, and record grades in Skyward. Formal reports of grades will follow the same timeline of the traditional calendar.
- Students receiving special education services will be assigned a teacher at their school of zone/service, subject to change based on enrollment.
- Failure to meet the requirements of the Sumner Virtual Academy will result in a hearing by the academy's review board for a possible return to the child's school of zone.

Those interested in this enrollment option will be able to register through Skyward but will complete their enrollment on the designated Registration Nights at their school of zone.

Calendar

Sumner Virtual Academy follows the district calendar, including holidays and bad weather days, and can be found on the district website: 2020-2021 Calendar For students attending Union STEM Sumner Virtual Academy ONLY 2020-2021 Union STEM Calendar

Withdrawals and Transfers

Upon registration to Sumner Virtual Academy, families have agreed to stay with the program for a full quarter (K-8) or semester (9-12). Transfers from the program to the child's local zoned school may take place following the completion of the quarter or semester. If a family chooses to withdraw from Sumner County Schools, that will take place at the local zoned school where registration took place.

High School Guidelines

High School students will commit to the Virtual Academy in 18-week (Semester) segments. Each student will enroll in a minimum of 4 credits and a maximum of 5 credits, unless a senior student can complete credit requirements with less than 4 credits.

The school's lab coordinator will monitor the progress of learning for students who chose Sumner Virtual Academy. The students may request tutoring sessions based on need through Zoom.

Student Support

Extracurriculars and Athletics

Students registered in Sumner Virtual Academy will be permitted to participate in afterschool activities, such as extracurricular clubs or athletics connected to the school.

Guidance

Counseling, mental health, and social services are provided to support the mental, emotional, and social health of every student. Lessons and services, including developmental classroom guidance activities and preventative educational programs, to enhance and promote academic, personal, and social growth are available to SVA students. Contact the school's guidance department for support.

"Research from the children's media field suggests that technology can, indeed, facilitate meaningful connection. Multiple studies show that a healthier way for children to interact with technology (especially screen media) is if an adult is physically or virtually present and participating in usage with the child. The positive benefits increase when the technology delivers high-quality educational content."

   ---Retrieved from https://www.panoramaed.com/blog/8-strategies-sense-of-belonging-virtually

English Learners

Students who speak English as a second language will continue to receive support from their EL teachers. Any new students noted as speaking another language at home will be screened for the level of support needed. EL teachers will also ensure that all teachers working with EL students are aware of student skills and language levels. EL teachers will work with the virtual classroom teachers to develop a toolkit of strategies to support students online and in accessing the curriculum.

Special Education

Students receiving services from Special Education and with a current individual education plan (IEP), will continue receiving support through virtual learning. The special education teacher at the child's zoned school will collaborate with the classroom teacher to ensure modifications and

accommodations are being met and will make suggested alterations to instruction to meet the child's needs.

Section 504

If a Sumner County student is evaluated and meets criteria for Section 504, the district will provide reasonable accommodations to ensure the student receives a commensurate education, that is, the student will be served as adequately as non-disabled students. Families with questions regarding the evaluation process and 504 plans, please contact your child's teacher.

Honors

For a high school student to obtain honors credit at the Sumner Virtual Academy, an Honors Portfolio will be assigned to accompany the Edgenuity course.

Online Learning

Technology Requirements

Much of the school day will be spent online with direct communication with occurring between the student and teacher. To participate in Sumner Virtual Academy, each student must have his or her own computer with a working camera and microphone for online instruction to be participatory and engaging. Students must also have internet access throughout the regular school day.

Online Learning is Different

In the virtual classroom, teachers and students are trying to build a relationship through a screen and through multiple conversations. It is important for communication to be extra clear and simple so everyone can understand the expectations. Work will be assigned, and learning will be provided through Google Classroom. Students will be required to work independently without the teacher giving feedback constantly during a thirty-minute work period as they would in the classroom. Also, students need to have opportunities to work away from the screen to work in different media.

Guidelines for Success to Online Learning

"Researchers have found that students tend to get higher grades the more often they log in to the online-learning system, the more lessons they access, the more they click, and the more they post in online-discussion boards," (Herold, 2017).

Students are encouraged to fully participate in online learning. It is through full participation that they will see the highest level of success. By attending all synchronous lessons, completing all asynchronous work, and fully engaging in all assignments, students will gain the most learning. In addition, parent support and feedback will also enhance online learning.

Library Checkout

Books are available for virtual and hardback checkout. Virtual teachers will help families wishing to check out a physical book from the school library by working with the librarian at their zoned school for book check out. Once selected and contacted, families may pick up and return books from the front office of the school.

Family Responsibilities

Families are responsible for the safety and security of children participating in Sumner Virtual Academy. Younger students should never be left at home alone during the school day and older students should be left alone only for limited amounts of time. It is extremely important that a parent be consistently available for assistance within the home.

- **Elementary School Assistance level:** The parent will need to provide substantial support to the student throughout the school day and should be with the student physically all day.
- **Secondary Assistance level:** The parent should be available to aid the student as needed throughout the school day. The parent should be in the same general location all day but may always not need to be with the student.

Responsibilities of the Parent:

- Monitor Google Classroom or Edgenuity regularly for student grades and completion of coursework.
- Complete joint calls with the teacher and student, if needed.
- Monitor the student to ensure that he or she is completing schoolwork and attending live lessons.
- Provide a specific location for student work that is free of distractions and allows for monitoring of the student's online activities.
- Make sure the student completes work without too much help from the parent.
- Aid the student in trouble-shooting computer problems or answering course related questions.

As a family, we commit to:

- recognize that the education of children is the joint responsibility of the family and the school community
- support the respectful ethos of the school by setting a good example in my own speech and behavior towards all members of the school community
- work together with teachers for the benefit of children, including to resolve any issues of concern and to discuss and clarify specific events in order to bring about a positive solution
- follow the Sumner Virtual Academy protocol to resolving issues: speaking to the teacher first; if unresolved, then the principal

- reinforce and support the school's code of conduct for students
- not engaging in disruptive behavior which interferes with the operation of an online classroom or office area
- build positive relationships with teachers, other parents, and the student's friends
- ask the teacher for help when the adults at home do not understand the content well enough to support the student

Family Engagement

Families are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning. Families are asked to reach out to the teacher or lab coordinator/tutor if directions are unclear or if their child is struggling with an idea or skill at home.

Responsibilities of the Student

Students participating in Sumner Virtual Academy agree that the typical school day of the zoned school will remain the school day for online learning.

- Students may have synchronous and asynchronous learning.
- During offline times, students will stay focused on schoolwork and learning, just as they would inside of the classroom.
- Students will submit classwork, assignments, and assessments through Google Classroom or Edgenuity by the designated due time.
- If a student is experiencing difficulty with academics or social/emotional challenges, the student will ask the teacher or guidance department at the zone school for help so support may be provided.
- Any activity (quizzes, tests, exams) will need to be completed during school hours.

Grading

Students participating in Sumner Virtual Academy will continue to receive grades just as they would if attending their zoned school. Families will access the student's gradebook and progress through Skyward. Students in grades K-3 will receive grades for the domains of the subject areas and grades will be recorded as a 1, 2, or 3 showing their level of mastery for related grade level standards. Students in grades 4-12 will receive traditional grades showing a percentage of mastery.

Review Board

Families, teachers, and high school lab coordinators will monitor student learning throughout online learning. When grades and attendance begin to show that a child is not performing as well as predicted, based on past years' learning, the teacher will bring the student to the review board. Interventions will be put in place to help the child reach the intended and predicted level of mastery and attendance. If the family is unable to support the child at home or the interventions do not show an improvement, the Review Board may indicate a necessity to return to learning in the child's zoned school.

Communication

For Kindergarten through 8th grade, there are several ways to communicate with your child's teacher. You are encouraged to find out the best way to reach your teacher during unscheduled times.

- *Email*: Each teacher has an email address of first.last@sumnerschools.org. Families should provide an email address to the school via Skyward during registration as well as to the teacher. Although each teacher has an email account linked to the Google Classroom, that account is often full of assignments and emails from families can be easily overlooked. Families are encouraged to use the sumnerschools.org email address as the primary email.
- *Google Classroom:* Each student will be set up in a Google Classroom and will receive assignments in this platform. Their email address will only be accessible to other students and teachers from Sumner County Schools.
- *Remind:* Families will receive text reminders via the Remind app. In addition, this is also how families will check in for daily attendance.
- *Weekly Updates from Teachers:* Teachers will provide families with a weekly update of upcoming learning by the end of the day on Fridays. This will allow families to make appropriate schedules for synchronous learning.
- *Teacher Office Hours:* Families and students are encouraged to reach out to teachers during office hours to ask clarifying questions or to ask for a reteaching opportunity. Remember that teachers want to see every student be successful and by reaching out to the teacher for help, the teacher is able to ensure learning.

For 9th through 12th grade, students are encouraged to contact the available tutors to schedule a tutoring session.

- *Tech Support:* If your child experiences technical difficulties tied to Sumner County Schools, please reach out to your school's lab coordinator or Rhonda Bruce.
- *Available Tutor List:* See virtual.sumnerschools.org for a full list of tutors available by subject area.
- *School-level help:* The school-level help will be provided by the school's lab coordinator. See the school-level parent communication document.

Attendance

Success in Sumner Virtual Academy depends on regular and punctual attendance. Students need to be active participants in their classes to achieve the maximum benefits of online learning. Each day, students will be expected to check in via Remind to receive credit for daily attendance. Virtual school hours mimic the days and hours of traditional school. It is the responsibility of the student and family to know and understand the attendance policy to ensure that students do everything possible to minimize absences from school to least affect learning.

Bad Weather Days

Sumner Virtual Academy follows the school calendar of Sumner County Schools, including bad weather days. If schools are closed due to bad weather, Sumner Virtual Academy will also be closed.

Behavioral Expectations

Cyberbullying

Any bullying as outlined in this policy through online means (using any application, tool, or forum on the internet)

- Tampering with someone else's electronic files, photos, or personal data
- Disparaging, embarrassing, intimidating, insulting, humiliating, hurting, or threatening someone through online means, including sending text messages or on messaging services (i.e. WhatsApp)
- Publicly humiliating someone online (e.g., Facebook, WhatsApp, Snapchat, sharing inappropriate pictures, etc.)

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is taking another person's idea or original work without giving them proper credit through citations and references. Plagiarism may also be seen when students turn in assignments copied in full or in part from other sources. It is important to use ideas or concepts gained from texts studied in class, and there are proper ways to show evidence from the text. Students should use strategies introduced by their teacher to cite their sources.

Appropriate Dress

Although there is not a strict dress code for online learning, students are asked to dress appropriately. Teachers and peers would always like to see the student's face. Please ensure that dress is appropriate and would match guidelines set for the zoned school.

Appropriate Online Behavior

Students will be asked to include video during synchronous learning times. It is important for teachers and students to have the face-to-face learning time, which consists of videos being turned on. Families will want to find a quiet place in the house where the student will be able to hear the teacher and classmates. In addition, there should be limited background noise if the student's microphone is turned on. If learning groups consist of five or more students, students will be asked to mute their microphones unless it is their time to talk.

Kindness

Be kind online. Students will spend a good amount of time creating digital content through videos, writing, and visuals. It is important to leave a digital footprint that leaves a positive impact for other students and builds strong relationships across the virtual classroom.

Sample Schedules

Virtual classroom schedules will differ from student to student, depending on the grade level and teacher. Each day will consist of time for online synchronous lessons and asynchronous lessons. Students may watch videos of lessons and respond with classwork, or they may engage in live discussions. The daily requirements may change throughout the week depending on the type of lesson that will take place within the subject area. Teachers will attempt to always give clear directions to families regarding the upcoming week's schedule so families may schedule accordingly. However, families are asked to be flexible if a change must occur.

Sample K-5 Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00-8:15	Virtual Morning Meeting	Virtual Morning Meeting	Virtual Morning Meeting	Virtual Morning Meeting	Virtual Morning Meeting
8:15-8:45	ELA Social Studies	ELA Social Studies	ELA Social Studies	ELA Social Studies	ELA Social Studies
8:45-9:00	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
9:00-9:45	ELA Lesson	ELA Lesson	ELA Lesson	ELA Lesson	ELA Lesson
9:45-10:15	Writing Supported by Curriculum - Virtual Writing Conferences	Writing Supported by Curriculum - Virtual Writing Conferences	Writing Supported by Curriculum - Virtual Writing Conferences	Writing Supported by Curriculum - Virtual Writing Conferences	Writing Supported by Curriculum - Virtual Writing Conferences
10:15-10:30	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
10:15-11:00	Class Meeting Online to Include Number Corner	Class Meeting Online to Include Number Corner	Class Meeting Online to Include Number Corner	Class Meeting Online to Include Number Corner	Class Meeting Online to Include Number Corner
11:00-12:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:00-1:30	Math/Science	Math/Science	Math/Science	Math/Science	Math/Science
1:30-2:00	Physical Activity Time	Physical Activity Time	Physical Activity Time	Physical Activity Time	Physical Activity Time
2:00-3:15	Related Arts	STEM Activities	Related Arts	STEM Activities	Related Arts

Sample 6-8 Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00-9:45	ELA - Online Class Meeting	ELA	ELA - Online Class Meeting	ELA	ELA - Online Class Meeting
9:45-10:00	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
10:00-11:30	Math	Math - Online Class Meeting	Math	Math - Online Class Meeting	Math
11:30-12:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:00-12:45	Science - Online Class Meeting	Science	Science	Science	Science - Online Class Meeting
12:45-1:30	Social Studies	Social Studies - Online Class Meeting	Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies - Online Class Meeting
1:30-2:00	Physical Activity Time	Physical Activity Time	Physical Activity Time	Physical Activity Time	Physical Activity Time
2:00-3:15	Related Arts	Independent Work - Virtual Office Hours	Related Arts	Independent Work - Virtual Office Hours	Related Arts

Sample 9-12 Schedule

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00-9:45	1st Block Class	1st Block Class	1st Block Class	1st Block Class	1st Block Class
9:45-10:00	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
10:00-11:30	2nd Block Class	2nd Block Class	2nd Block Class	2nd Block Class	2nd Block Class
11:30-12:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:00-1:30	3rd Block Class	3rd Block Class	3rd Block Class	3rd Block Class	3rd Block Class
1:30-1:45	Physical Activity Time	Physical Activity Time	Physical Activity Time	Physical Activity Time	Physical Activity Time
1:45-3:15	4th Block Class	4th Block Class	4th Block Class	4th Block Class	4th Block Class

*Students receiving special education services will be assigned a teacher at their school of zone/service, subject to change based on enrollment.

* Interventions and Enrichment will be provided within the daily schedule and will be based on the needs of the child and times set by teachers' schedules.

Instructional Approaches
Virtual/Synchronous Instruction
Independent work time supported by an accessible teacher
Independent work time; reflect on teacher feedback; submit pending assignments
Self-guided break

Glossary

Asynchronous: Time to work individually on tasks. Teachers are available on Zoom to help students during the times indicated.

Socratic Seminar: Each seminar is organized around a question that pushes students' thinking. The goal of a Socratic Seminar is to extend student learning by exploring and debating an intriguing question that provokes new thinking. Students' conversation should go beyond summarizing learning they have done in previous lessons.

Synchronous: Teachers may use this time for face-to-face through Zoom or Google Meet.

Instructional Leaders

If further information is required, please reach out to the following coordinators:

Elementary: Susan.Breitling@sumnerschools.org

Middle School: Melinda.Norman@sumnerschools.org

High School: School-level Lab Coordinators