

MRVED ONLINE PROGRAM STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK

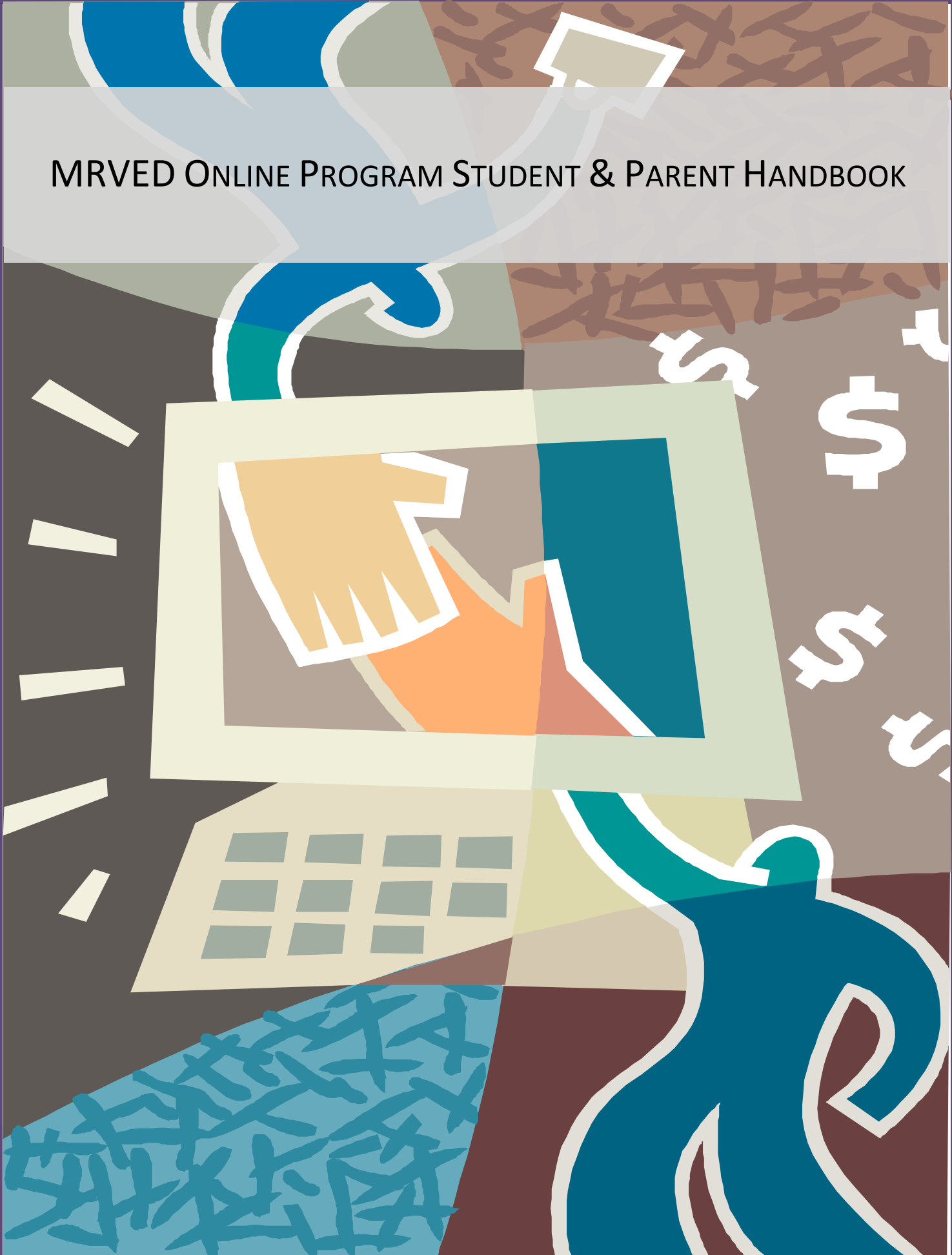


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Welcome

Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to the MRVED Online Program, a supplemental online learning program that offers you the opportunity to take online courses in addition to the courses you take at your local school.

Online education is an exciting new learning opportunity that provides additional courses for you to take, as well as allowing for more flexibility in your schedule. While online learning can be exciting and flexible, it does require you to be disciplined and work on your online courses each day, just as you would in a face to face course.

As an online learning student the following suggestions will help you have a positive and successful experience:

- Log in and complete some work every day. Don't let yourself get behind.
- Online learning is *not* easier than learning in a traditional classroom. It is easy to get behind in an online course. Remember, learning takes effort.
- Be self-motivated and self-disciplined. Make use of the time you have scheduled for this course.
- Online courses provide opportunities to learn and apply new skills. Be curious. Fully participate in your course. Share your ideas and perspectives with your online classmates and your teacher.
- Learn to communicate effectively through writing. Be sure to use good "netiquette" when communicating online.
- Be engaged in your learning. Even though your online learning teacher isn't in the classroom with you and may not even teach in your school, they are available in your virtual classroom.
- If you need help, ask for it! Your teacher needs to know right away if you are having any problems with the technology or the course requirements. You also have people in your school that can help you out. Talk to your local online learning site facilitator (The list on page 5 will indicate who that person is in your school). MRVED Online staff is also available to provide guidance.
- Ask questions. You need to let your online teacher know if you are confused. (They can't see the puzzled look on your face. 😊)
- Online learning is going to be different than your regular courses. Be prepared to enjoy this relatively new way of taking a course.
- Give your online course your best effort. This course won't work, unless you do.

We are excited to be a part of your education through the MRVED Online Program!

Karen Jacobson, MRVED Online Program Director

kjacobson@mnrved.k12.mn.us

320-269-9297

Contact Information

MRVED Online Learning Site Facilitators				
Name	Position	District	Phone	E-mail
Karen Jacobson	MRVED Online Program Director	MRVED	320-269-9297	kjacobson@mrved.net
Jason Strand	Guidance Counselor	Benson	320-843-2710	jstrand@benison.k12.mn.us
Rebecca Mortenson	Guidance Counselor	Dawson/Boyd	320-769-2955	rebeccam@dwby.k12.mn.us
Paul Lowry	Guidance Counselor	Lac qui Parle Valley	320-752-4200	plowry@lqpv.org
Shelley Buntjer	Guidance Counselor	Lakeview	507-423-5164	shelleybuntjer@lakeview2167.com
Melea Ellingson	Guidance Counselor	Montevideo	320-269-6446	mellingson@montevideoschools.org
Jeremy Frie	Principal	Minneota	507-872-6175	jeremy.frie@minneotaschools.org
Rhonda Brandt	Principal	MVALC	320-269-7131	rbrandt@montevideoschools.org
Antoni Seemann	Guidance Counselor	Ortonville	320-839-6181	antoni.seemann@ortonville.k12.mn.us
Brian Gauer	Principal	Renville County West	320-329-8368	bgauer@rcw.k12.mn.us
Ryan Luft	Principal	Yellow Medicine East	320-564-4081	rluft@isd2190.org

MRVED Online Course Instructors 2017-18

Name	Course	District	Phone	E-mail
Peggy Bausman	Advanced Accounting	Benson	320-843-2710	pbausman@benson.k12.mn.us
Justin Wager	Biomechanics	Dawson/Boyd	320-769-2955	juwager@dwby.k12.mn.us
Charlene Reuss	Creative Writing	LQPV	320-752-4200	creuss@lqpv.org
Tori Barka	Plant Production	Lakeview	507-423-5164	toribarka@lakeview2167.com
Miranda Gravley	Spanish II	Minneota	507-872-6175	miranda.gravley@minneotaschools.org
Scott Soden	Writing for Success in College	Montevideo	320-269-6446	ssoden@montevideoschools.org
Joan Groothuis	Sociology	MVALC	320-269-7131	joang@montevideoschools.org
Mary Haberman	Medical Biology	MVALC	320-269-7131	mhaberman@montevideoschools.org
Kim Johnson	Accounting	Ortonville	320-839-6181	kimberly.johnson@ortonville.k12.mn.us
JoDee Driggs	Exploration of the Mystery Genre	Renville County West	320-329-8368	jdriggs@rcw.k12.mn.us
Kelly Gigstad	Marketing I	Renville County West	320-329-8368	kgigstad@rcw.k12.mn.us
Amanda Beckler	Photography	Renville County West	320-329-8368	abeckler@rcw.k12.mn.us
Kaia Bergeson	Family and Teen Issues	Yellow Medicine East	320-564-4081	kbergeson@isd2190.org

MRVED Online Program

Know how it works

The MRVED Online Program provides online courses to supplement the curricula offered by local schools. Students accessing MRVED Online Program courses typically are scheduled into the regular school day of their local schools; i.e., students go to a computer lab or other school location with a computer during a set period during the day to work on the online course.

The course is taught by an online teacher who interacts personally with students via the numerous online course tools of the course management system, Moodle. Interactions include a course website, discussion forums, email, online chat tools, links to other web-based resources or activities and by phone. Your online teacher is most often a teacher from one of the school partners in the MRVED Online network ([see Appendix A](#)).

The courses are asynchronous, which means you can access them at any time during the day or night. The courses also allow a certain amount of self-pacing, so you can complete requirements as quickly as you would like within certain assignment time periods. Also teachers may direct you to participate in group work with other students during specific weeks of the semester.

Signing up for a class and coordinating with your school

Each school district is guaranteed 3 seats per course. If a district does not use their seats, the host district then has preference to fill the seats, and then seats will open to a first come first serve basis.

Process

1. Meet with counselor and/or principal to discuss online learning.
2. Register for your course.
3. Electronically complete the MRVED Online Course Enrollment Form (Found on the MRVED website under Online Learning, Forms). Print and sign the form after you have electronically completed the form.
4. MRVED Online Site Facilitator will fax, email, or mail registration form to the MRVED office.
5. Wait for instructor to email Moodle registration, syllabus, and course instructions to you.

About the MRVED Online Program

Class Size

Minnesota State Law states “Unless the commissioner grants a waiver, a teacher providing online learning instruction must not instruct more than 40 students in any one online learning course or program”. The MRVED is planning on no more than 24-27 students enrolled in each course (thus the 3 seat limit per district).

Supplemental Learning

Since the MRVED Online Program is a supplemental online learning program, you cannot take all your courses online with the MRVED. The registration process follows several steps noted below:

Review considerations for enrolling in online learning ([Appendix B](#)). Carefully think about making the commitment to enroll in an online learning course by reviewing the expectations for student participation ([Appendix C](#)), parental or guardian support and technical guidelines ([Appendix D](#)).

Meet with your high school counselor and/or principal to discuss your academic schedule. To enroll in supplemental online learning and register for an online course, you will need to have an available slot in your local class schedule. The online course should apply to your plan for graduation. The registration form requires your school counselor to verify that the online course will apply to your academic plan and meet your local school’s graduation requirements.

Make sure you know who your local online school site facilitator is, and work closely with that person. This is the person who adjusts your academic schedule, signs your registration form, monitors progress, and troubleshoots any issues that arise.

Technical guidelines

Students registering for online classes should have daily access to a computer and a reliable Internet connection. Your district will fit your online course into your daily class schedule. You will report to the room assigned and will have a computer with an Internet connection available to you. If you choose to work on your course at a time other than that scheduled, you will want to review the technical guidelines in [Appendix D](#) to ensure your computer and Internet service will be adequate.

****You must have regular access to a computer and Internet connection including times when your local school is on break or has scheduled days off. (i.e. Students taking Marketing from RCW will need to start their courses two weeks before Labor Day and other breaks may not align between all districts.)****

Be prepared to have a contingency plan. “The Internet was down” cannot be used as an excuse.

Technical Issues Flowchart

If you are experiencing technical issues, please refer to the flowchart in [Appendix E](#).

Online courses count

Online courses are as important as onsite courses and count toward grade level progression, state academic standards, GPA’s, and graduation. Additionally, they factor into weekly eligibility processes required for participation in extracurricular activities.

Grades count, too

Instructors will provide adequate feedback throughout the course so the student, parent, and school are kept abreast on progress. Official grades are required to be reported at mid-quarter, quarter, and semester. If a student is not meeting expectations, online course teachers will adhere to the flowchart in [Appendix F](#).

Final grades are reported to your local school as a letter grade. Grades will be based on the online teacher's assessment of your work and the degree to which you have met course requirements.

Course requirements may include:

- Student participation, effort, and completion of homework;
- Responsibility, as reflected in timely preparation of online coursework;
- Growth and achievement in meeting content standards;
- Skills/knowledge gained as evidenced by performance on assignments, exams, and projects.

Course requirements, including grading and assessment procedures will be available to students, parents, counselors, online learning contact people, and administrators at the beginning of each course in a prescribed syllabus format determined by the commissioner of education. ([Appendix G](#)).

A copy of the course syllabus and this handbook is available from your school site facilitator at any time and at www.mrved.com under Online Learning.

Your online teacher will identify the value of each assignment and determine student grades. Penalties and consequences for late submission of work are the responsibility of the online learning teacher as noted in the syllabus.

JMC student management system will be used by teachers to record grades. It will be available to students and parents so they can monitor attendance, progress, and grades.

Attendance

Moodle has features that allow instructors to see when the last time students logged in, which pages they visited, their activity in the course, and other details. Generally, students who have not logged in will be reminded after two days of inactivity. After one reminder with no response, the student's parents and the counselor from their home district will be notified. The district contact, the OLL course instructor, and the student will develop a plan that will help the student get back on track.

Drop/Add Policy

Online students will follow their home districts drop/withdrawal policy. This includes submitting any forms required. If a student drops/withdraws from an online course, the online site facilitator will communicate with the MRVED Online Program Director.

No student will be allowed to add a MRVED online course if that course has completed five (5) days of classes.

Withdrawal due to Non Attendance

We are required by law to drop students if they have not been "attending" for 15 school days. For online programs, this generally means 15 school days without any activity. In online learning

“attendance” is defined by engagement with course materials and assignments, and interaction with the teacher and other students in the course. Examples include: logging on, submitting assignments, verbal or written contact with the instructor, or other activities as defined by the online learning program.

Extra Curricular Eligibility

Each student will abide by their home districts athletic eligibility rules and regulations. As grading periods and academic eligibility rules are different among the eight schools, some students, in the same course, may serve their penalty before or after someone in the same course.

Get started right away

Students who immediately engage with their courses and online teachers are far more likely to succeed. Once you have logged in, your online teacher will post instructions on how to begin and what to get started on. Don't procrastinate! Ask questions!

Work every day

Online courses require more self-discipline than traditional courses because there is no teacher reminding you to be attentive when you are “in class”. Successful students log into courses every day, follow instructions, and initiate communication with online teachers. Remember that the technology records your daily “attendance” in the course—and what work you were doing. Are you ready to be a successful online student? See [Appendix H](#) for a Student Readiness Survey. Every student must take this survey to enroll in an online course through the MRVED. Discuss the results with your parent/guardian and guidance counselor.

If your online teacher or the MRVED student support coordinator has noted that you are no longer an active participant in the course, you and your parents will receive several notifications to contact the teacher as noted in [Appendix F](#). Lack of active online participation could result in being withdrawn from the course if you don't immediately respond. You must respond immediately to these notifications to ensure your continued enrollment in the online course.

Accommodations and Modifications

If you are in need of any accommodations or modifications as outlined in an IEP or 504 Plan, the MRVED will request the accommodations and modifications page and any other relevant information and provide that to your teacher.

If your IEP/504 plan lists assistive technologies as a requirement for you to participate in a MRVED online course, your home district will accommodate you with such technologies.

Support Services

If needed, students should utilize support services (counselors, social workers, tutoring services) within their home school district.

Don't use the “computer ate my homework” excuse

Always keep dated electronic copies (on a flash drive, network folder, or online) of any homework that you submit. Email copies of your homework to yourself as well as your teacher. This confirms that you sent your homework, even if some techno-glitch keeps it from getting to your online teacher. It is still your responsibility to meet course deadlines.

Follow the Internet Use Agreement

This is the document you sign that says you will use the Internet wisely, appropriately and that you will refrain from inappropriate sites and behavior. Each district has an Acceptable Use Policy that you must have signed prior to enrolling in this course. You are required to follow your home district policy. This Acceptable Use Policy is applicable to the MRVED online course. In addition, you must abide by the MRVED Online Internet Use Policy found in [Appendix I](#).

Demonstrate proper conduct

Your district has a conduct and disciplinary code with associated rights and responsibilities. As with any classroom, online instructors will attempt to address conduct and discipline problems directly with you prior to referring you to the next level. If your online teacher is unable to resolve the problem or if the infraction requires administrative notification, your online teacher will contact your online learning site facilitator, principal, and the MRVED Online Program Director. The MRVED Online Program Director will also have the responsibility of sharing with the instructor any action taken in the situation. Local discipline codes and policies/ procedures for student rights and responsibilities will be used in handling the situation. If you are experiencing a problem with your online teacher, you should talk with your site facilitator who will address the issue with the MRVED Online Program Director, if necessary. If you feel your site facilitator has not addressed the issue, you may contact the MRVED Online Program Director.

Improper conduct is defined as interfering with the teaching and learning occurring on the website by posting profane, threatening, abusive or inappropriate language—including demeaning written or oral comments of an ethnic, sexist, or racist nature and unwanted sexual advances or intimidations—to an online teacher, staff member, or student via verbal, email, threaded discussion, chat room or other communication.

Improper conduct also includes using the computer system to post inappropriate graphics or links to inappropriate web sites or “hacking” into another person’s computer files for any reason.

Any improper behavior may result in removal from the online course.

Don’t cheat

Academic dishonesty includes breaches of academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, and attempts by a student to show possession of knowledge and skills he/she does not possess. These breaches can include:

- The use of non-permissible materials in any form during a quiz or examination.
- Copying the answers of another student, whether on a test, quiz, or homework.
- Plagiarizing, or using someone else’s work that is evaluated as the student’s own work.
- Impersonating another student on any assessment, assignment, or activity.
- Helping someone else commit these infractions.

Cheating/plagiarism is not typically much of an issue since online teachers get to know their students—and their writing styles—so well that they can spot many instances of cheating. Online course pedagogy also employs a variety of means to minimize unethical behavior. For example, more performance-based assessments are used, as well as timed assessments. Another strategy is to do an Internet search for a string of words that may be used by students. MRVED Online staff will contact a student’s site facilitator

anytime that cheating is suspected. If cheating is confirmed, school officials will advise online staff regarding consequences in accordance with local school policy.

MRVED Online Program and federal and state regulations

Go to [Appendix J](#) for federal and state legislation concerning anti-discrimination/ harassment, equity, FERPA (Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act), Title VI/IX, and other civil rights legislation and Minnesota legislation guiding certified online learning.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: MRVED 2017-18 School Districts

Consortium school districts serviced by the Minnesota River Valley Education District include the following:

- 777 Benson
- 378 Dawson/Boyd
- 2853 Lac qui Parle Valley
- 2167 Lakeview
- 414 Minneota
- 6018 Minnesota Valley Area Learning Center
- 129 Montevideo
- 2903 Ortonville
- 2890 Renville County West
- 2190 Yellow Medicine East

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Appendix B: Considerations for online learning enrollment

Student Considerations

Are you considering taking some of your courses online? Good for you!

But first, make sure you understand what it takes to be an online learning student. Online learning can sound so wonderful that some students start online courses with an unrealistic vision. In reality, online courses generally require just as much, if not more, time and energy as traditional classroom courses. Also, online learning requires specific computer skills and learning strategies in order to succeed.

To see if you're ready, see how many items you can check off on the following checklist:

1. Persistence

Persistence is perhaps the biggest key to success in online learning. Students who succeed in online learning are those who are willing to tolerate technical difficulties, seek help when needed, work daily on every class, and persist through challenges.

- When you run into a challenge, keep trying and ask for help.
- Set up a manageable study schedule for yourself and stick to it. Students who succeed are those who log in and make progress every day— even after the novelty of going to school online starts to wear off!

2. Effective time-management skills

You must be able to manage your time well. Most courses are not taught in real time and there are no set times for classes.

This flexibility is one of the great benefits of online learning. However, it can also be a drawback for a student who procrastinates, is unable to stick to a routine study schedule, or is not able to independently complete assignments without daily reminders from a teacher.

Effective time-management skills don't just happen. They have to be learned. Once you learn them, they will benefit you throughout your life. Follow this list of tips to develop your own good time-management skills:

- Review the syllabus for each of your courses and develop a long-term plan for completing your major assignments. Use the assignment calculator at the University of Minnesota to develop a plan: <http://www.lib.umn.edu/help/calculator/>
- Make a daily "To Do" list and have fun checking things off the list as you complete them.
- It takes time to develop good habits, but over time, you'll start to enjoy the satisfaction that comes from being well-organized and accomplishing important tasks.

3. Effective and appropriate communication skills

Communication skills are very important in online learning because students have to be willing to seek help when they need it. Teachers are very willing to help students, but they are unable to pick up on non-verbal cues, such as a look of confusion on a student's face. Follow these tips:

Use the tools provided by the school to communicate with your teachers. Many online schools and programs provide several ways for students and parents to communicate with teachers and staff, including email, discussion groups, chat room office hours, cell phones, and even text messaging. Teachers and staff are glad to take questions from students and want to help you to succeed in your classes. At first it may feel awkward to talk to your teachers this way, but don't worry. Your teacher has chat room or cell phone office hours; so don't be shy about using those tools to communicate with your teacher.

Use appropriate style and language for school. It's also important to understand appropriate communication for a school setting. When communicating with teachers and other staff members, you should write in full, grammatically correct sentences and with a respectful tone. Many students are used to a very informal style of writing in chat rooms, blogs, text messages, and so forth.

Online teachers are professionals and must be treated with respect and courtesy. Because of the distance, it's tempting for some students to say things out of anger, frustration, or even just to be friendly that they would never say to a teacher in person. Online teachers are professionals and must be treated with respect and courtesy.

4. Basic technical skills

The ability to create new documents, use a word processing program, navigate the Internet, and download software are some of the basic technical skills needed by online learners.

If you are unfamiliar with basic computer skills, you may want to find an online tutorial or consult the technical coordinator at your school for assistance.

You'll also want to review the MRVED Online Program technical guidelines, to make sure your computer meets program requirements.

5. Reading and writing skills

Reading and writing are the main ways you'll communicate in an online class. Although some hard copies of textbooks are available at school, you should be relatively comfortable reading extensive documents on a computer screen and typing without frustration.

Some tests and quizzes have multiple-choice questions, but many of your assignments will involve writing short or long answers.

6. Motivation and independence

To be successful in online learning, a student has to want to be successful. Online learning requires independence, internal motivation, responsibility, and a certain level of maturity.

- Have you given some thought to your own personal reasons for attending school?
- Are you determined and self-motivated to succeed in school?

There are many worthwhile reasons to work hard in school. These might include a greater level of personal satisfaction with your future career, personal pride in your accomplishments, a wider range of opportunities available to you with higher education, and substantially higher lifetime earnings.

7. A good study environment

Another critical component of academic success is a good study environment.

- Get some peace and quiet. You will need a quiet place to work without distractions like television or siblings.
- Avoid games. Consider uninstalling any computer games to avoid temptation, or keep the games on a different computer in the house.
- Turn off your cell phone. Let friends and family members know the hours that you will be "at" school.
- Beware of surfing the black hole of the Internet. It is easy to wander off through the Internet for much longer than planned.
- Consider ergonomics. Adjust the height of your chair, keyboard, and screen so that you are comfortable. Forearms and thighs should be level and parallel to the floor. Wrists should not be bent while typing.
- Set up good lighting and comfortable seating. Lighting in the room should be at least as bright as the computer screen to avoid eyestrain.

Adapted from ISEEK K-12 Online Learning website and the Minnesota Department of Education.

Parental Considerations

Is your son or daughter prepared for online learning?

Success in an online course or program requires specific student attitudes and approaches to learning. To ensure academic success in online education, your child should have:

- Maturity to complete tasks with little supervision from the class instructor
- Motivation to complete work alone when you are not around
- Time management skills to study and complete assignments
- Technology skills required to take on an online course

Students who are most successful in online programs are those who:

- Have completed homework on a consistent basis in a traditional classroom setting
- Have encouraging supervision at home
- Have a positive attitude about school
- Are conscientious and persistent in accomplishing goals

Parents' checklist for supporting student success:

- Encourage your child and give positive feedback.
- Allow your child or teen to ask you for help.
- Encourage your teen or young adult to take responsibility for contacting his or her teachers, rather than having you contact them.
- Familiarize yourself with the curriculum. Work with your child or teen to develop a manageable study schedule.
- Model good time-management strategies, such as developing a personal schedule or daily "to do" list. Help your child to use these strategies.
- Talk to your child or teen about appropriate ways to communicate with teachers and classmates.
- Make sure your child has the necessary basic typing and computer skills.
- Evaluate your child's level of self-motivation. Talk about the many advantages of getting an education and earning a degree.
- Check your child's progress by using whatever methods the school provides (like a parent portal website). Talk directly with your child about his progress and grades and check in with the teachers periodically.
- Provide an optimal study space at home with minimal distractions, good lighting, comfortable seating, working computer and good wrist support.
- Never hesitate to call or write to school staff when you have questions or concerns.

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Adapted from ISEEK K-12 Online Learning website and the Minnesota Department of Education.

Appendix C: Expectations for Student Participation

Please review these expectations of students who register for a course with MRVED Online. If you understand how to participate actively and take responsibility for learning in the class, you will achieve successful results.

The MRVED Online Program is committed to providing equal access to high quality online learning opportunities for all students. Taking an online course can be a great experience, but it does require some special skills, like good time management and being able to work independently. Students and parents should also make sure that the online course would meet the student's educational goals.

As an online student you will be expected to:

- Participate and share your experiences, ideas and perspective with your teacher and other students. You will use critical thinking and decision-making skills in an online course and be expected to apply what you learn.
- Take the program and yourself seriously. Online learning is not easier than traditional classroom learning and it's easy to get behind in an online course.
- Make sure you can spend the time needed to do a good job on the course. This is typically 4-15 hours per week per class.
- Be self-motivated and self-disciplined. Make sure you have a private place to study and set aside time 5-6 days a week to work on your course.
- Be willing to "speak up" if any problems arise. Your instructor needs to know right away if you are having any problems with the technology or the course requirements.
- Be able to communicate through writing and use good "netiquette" when communicating online.
- Have access to a computer with an Internet connection and be able to complete basic computer tasks like saving files, looking for information on a web site and sending email.
- Be willing to try new skills and be open to learning new things.
- Review the course outline(s) or other materials for the online course(s) you plan to take.
- Read and understand the expectations for being a successful online student and the Student and Family Handbook for the MRVED Online Program.

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Appendix D: Technical Guidelines

Because MRVED Online instruction and curriculum is delivered via a web-based course management system, most students will be able to access their courses using any computer that has a reasonably current Internet browser.

Students are expected to be competent at using the Internet including downloading and uploading files. A valid email address is necessary for student/teacher communication, and students are expected to be able to access their e-mail account and send and receive email attachments.

In addition, some courses may require that students be able to use word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software.

Internet Browser

Moodle, the course management system in use by the MRVED Online Program, seems to work best in the Firefox or Chrome browser.

You can download the current version of Firefox for free from [Mozilla](#), or Chrome from [Google](#).

Apple's Safari browser is not recommended because it has compatibility issues with Moodle.

Hardware

You can access MRVED Online courses from any computer that is able to run a modern browser, but at a minimum you'll want:

Operating System:

Windows: 2000, XP, Vista, 7, 8, 10; Macintosh: OS 9.1, OS X, Lion

Processor:

Windows: Pentium 233 or higher; Macintosh: Power PC G3 or higher

Memory:

128 MB minimum; 256 MB or greater recommended

Internet connection:

56 Kbps modem minimum; broadband -- DSL or cable -- recommended

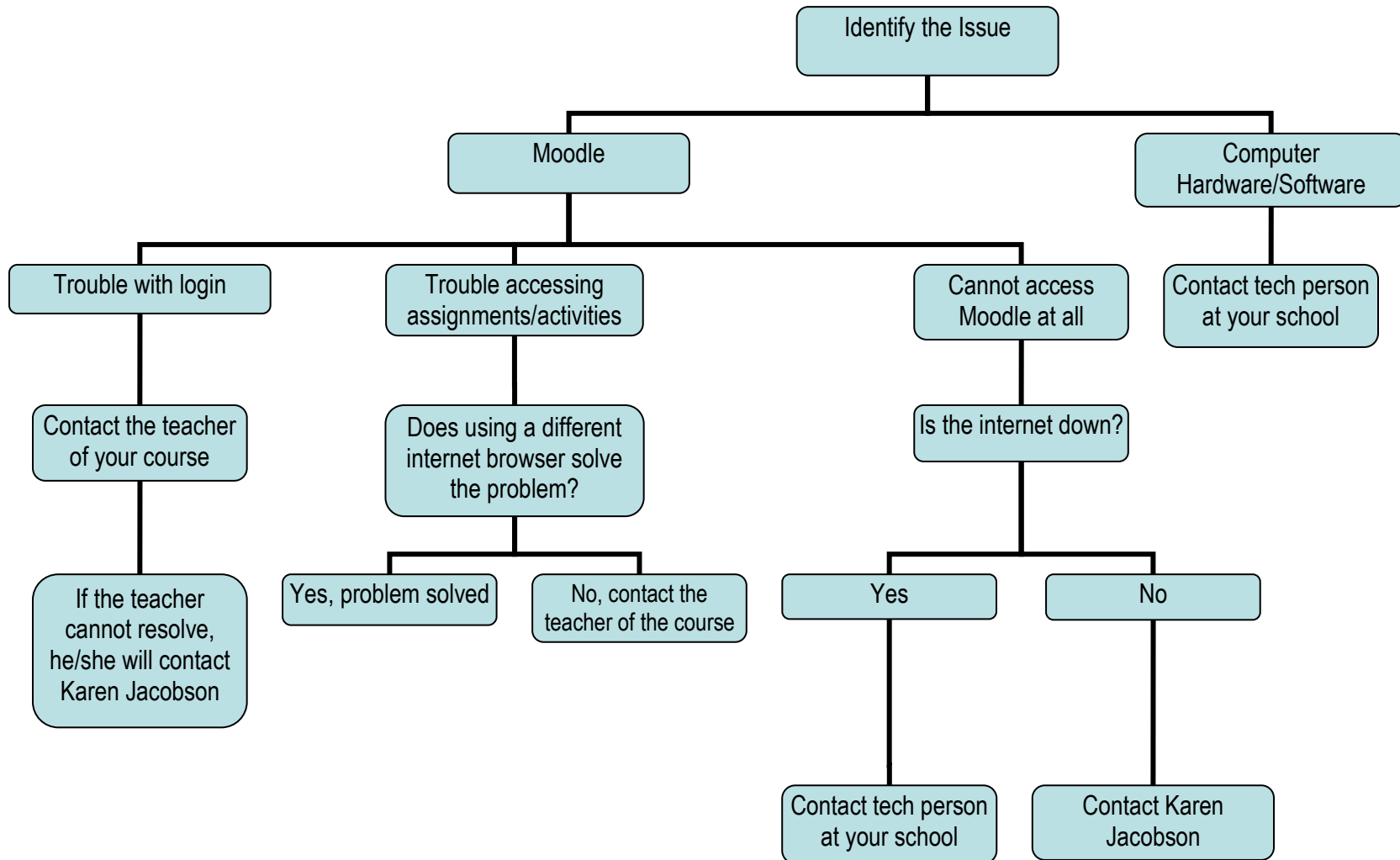
A sound card and speakers

Up-to-date sound card and speakers are recommended. Using a headset with microphone is the best way of attending a class session that requires sound if you are in a public setting.

Individual teachers may have additional requirements, depending on the content of the course. If you are unsure if your computer setup is adequate, contact the instructor of the course you wish to take before registering.

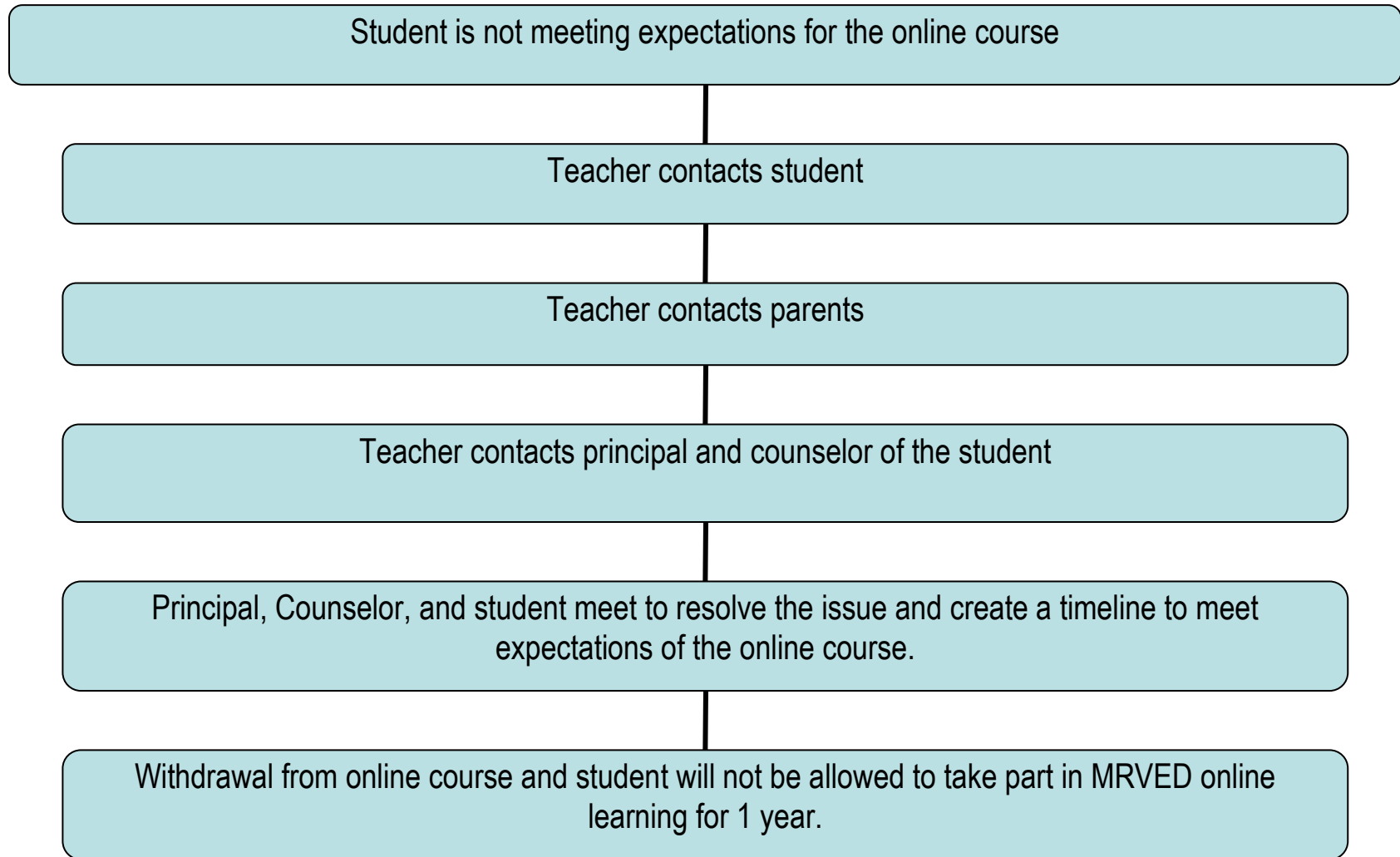
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Appendix E: Technical Issues Flowchart



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Appendix F: Not Meeting Expectations Flowchart



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Appendix G: Online Learning Syllabus Format

Online Course Syllabi POLICY

Online Learning Providers are required to develop a course syllabus for each course using a format prescribed by the Minnesota Department of Education and communicate the syllabus to the student, parents, and enrolling district prior to enrollment. This policy outlines the required components of a syllabus.

For the purposes of this policy, a syllabus is a written or electronic document that contains information students need to know in order to successfully complete the work of the course and enrolling districts will use to determine if the supplemental online learning course meets local district graduation requirements.

Each syllabus should include the following information:

- A. Instructional Contact, Communication, and Academic Support Information
 - 1. Instructor name and contact information (if available at time of student registration).
 - 2. Expectation for actual teacher contact time.
 - 3. Expectation for other student to teacher communication.
 - 4. Expectation for student participation (attendance).
 - 5. Academic support available to online students.
 - 6. Communication with enrolling district (supplemental enrollment).
 - a. Format and frequency of progress reports.
 - b. Format and timeline of submission of the final grade and credits earned to enrolling district.
- B. Information Specific to the Course

This information must be provided by the online learning program to enrolling districts of supplemental online learning students prior to the student enrolling in the course for review and approval by the enrolling district.

- 1. Course outline
 - a. Course name and credits.
 - b. Course pre-requisites if any exist.
 - c. Course goals and objectives.
 - d. Topic outline.
 - e. Required books and/or educational materials including how they will be made available.

- f. Minimum technical requirements of program and/or course.
 - g. The date, time, and place of the final examination if one is scheduled.
 - h. An explanation of extra credit if that option is provided to all students.
2. Assessment of student work
- a. General description of assignments, papers, projects, exams and other student work with a schedule of due dates and relative weight in the grade.
 - b. Policy for making up missed exams and grading late assignments.
 - c. Policy for addressing academic dishonesty.
3. State academic graduation requirements embedded in course.

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Appendix H: Student Readiness Survey

Am I Ready to Take an Online Class?

At the Minnesota River Valley Education District (MRVED), we believe that all students can learn, but that online classes are not necessarily the most appropriate learning environments for all students. The following survey will help you to assess whether or not online learning is for you.

We ask you to complete the Student Readiness Survey checklist below with your parent or guardian. Ask yourself the following questions and check those that you would answer "yes" to. Be honest with yourself. Your answers on this form will not be used solely to qualify or disqualify you for registration in an online class. They are primarily used to raise your own awareness of what will be expected of you, and to let us know that you have considered these issues before beginning your class.

After you have completed the Student Readiness Survey with your parent or guardian, please check off the box on the Enrollment form indicating you have completed the survey. Checking off the survey box on the Enrollment Form demonstrates that you have given thought to what is best for you. If you have any concerns about your decision to take an online class, please feel free to contact your school counselor, to discuss any questions or concerns that might come up as the result of completing this questionnaire.

Am I Ready to Take an Online Class?

Motivation and Attitude

To be successful in an online class, you must recognize that you are the primary person responsible for your own success and act accordingly when setting priorities and making decisions. You will need to be motivated and able to work independently. You must realize that an online class is not easier than the traditional course equivalent. Also, think about *why* you want to take this course online. Are you looking for a different way to achieve the course credits? Need flexibility in your schedule? Are you interested in a unique experience? If you really need the class, you will likely be more motivated to succeed.

- Would you, or those around you, describe you as a self-motivated person?
- Do you feel like you can stay on-task when doing schoolwork at home or in a study hall atmosphere?
- Do you stay focused when using the Internet for learning?
- Are you comfortable with little or no face-to-face interaction with your teacher?
- Are you a person that does not depend on others to remind you of due dates for assignments?
- Do you understand that an online class can be just as challenging as the same course offered on-site?
- Does your personal schedule make it difficult for you to take classes during the day?
- Do you need to take this online class?
- Do you really want to take this class online?

Support

To be successful in an online class you should feel comfortable asking for support from your parents/guardians and others around you when you need it. It is also very important to set up a regular time and place to focus on your course work and then stick to your schedule. In most districts you will be scheduled into a media center, computer lab, or study hall during the school day.

- Do you have someone at school or home to help you, if you have technical problems?
- Do you have a place in your home (with a computer) that is free of distractions?
- Are your parents/guardians supportive of you taking an online class?

Technical Skills

Your online class will require you to be comfortable using an e-mail program, Internet browser, and a word processor. There may be software or hardware that needs to be installed for your class. If you are not currently comfortable doing these things, then you must have a willingness to learn how to do them and be ready to put in a little extra effort to increase your own technical skills.

- Do you know how to connect to the Internet from your home computer?

- Can you cut and paste text in a word processor, and from one application to another?
- Are you comfortable using e-mail to communicate with others?
- Do you know how to use Internet applications such Internet Explorer, chat rooms, and discussion boards?
- Do you know how to do Internet research using search engines (Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc...)?
- Are you comfortable using the keyboard and have good typing skills?
- Do you look forward to learning new technology skills?

Academic Preparedness and Learning Style

There are no specific characteristics or personalities that can be used to predict if a student will be successful in the online environment. However, in an online class, you will probably need to read and write more than you do in a traditional class, and you will also need to be an independent worker who enjoys problem solving. You should also consider whether or not you have completed necessary prerequisites for the class.

- Do you enjoy reading and writing?
- When an instructor hands out directions for an assignment, do you like to figure things out on your own?
- Are you someone who can work at a project without putting everything off until the last minute?
- Can you organize your time so that you have regular work periods to complete online assignments?
- Do you ask teachers for help if you need it?
- Have you checked to be sure you have completed any necessary prerequisites for this class?

Checking the survey box on the Enrollment Form indicates that you agree to the following statement:

- "I have completed the survey and shared this information with my parent/guardian. I believe that I am a strong candidate for online learning. I also understand that the MRVED is not responsible for supervising my activities while working on course requirements, and that the MRVED is not liable for hardware and/or software conflicts, or data loss that may occur on my home computer system while I am taking an online class through the MRVED."

PARENTS: Your involvement can play a big part in helping your student achieve success in their online courses. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to take an active role in learning about the activities that will be required for course completion. Course Instructors will welcome contact with you and be happy to discuss your student's progress in their courses. Please feel free to visit the MRVED website for more Parent Information or contact your student's counselor.

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Appendix I: MRVED Online Program Acceptable Use Policy

By accepting a user account on the MRVED/LCTN Moodle site, a user is acknowledging that she or he has read and agrees to comply with the terms of this policy.

MRVED is responsible for securing its course management system and online resources in a reasonable and economically feasible manner against unauthorized access and/or abuse, while making them accessible for authorized and legitimate users. Any attempt to violate the provisions of this policy will result in disciplinary action in the form of temporary or permanent revocation of user accounts and may include referral to law enforcement or civil liability, regardless of the success or failure of the attempt.

The users of the MRVED Online Program are responsible for respecting and adhering to local, state, federal, and international laws. Any attempt to break those laws through the use of these resources may result in litigation against the offender by the proper authorities. If such an event should occur, the MRVED will fully comply with the authorities to provide any information necessary for the litigation process.

General Use Policy

Once a person receives a user account for the purpose of accessing the MRVED Online Program resources, that person is solely responsible for all actions taken while using that account. Therefore:

- Requesting a user account under false pretenses is a punishable disciplinary offense.
- Sharing your user account with any other person is prohibited. If you do share your user account with another person, you will be solely responsible for the actions of that other person while he or she is using the account.
- Deletion, examination, copying, or modification of files and/or data belonging to other users without their prior consent is prohibited.
- Attempts to evade or change resource quotas are prohibited.
- Use of MRVED resources for commercial, political, or other non-educational purposes is prohibited.
- Any unauthorized, deliberate action that damages or disrupts these resources, alters the normal performance, or causes malfunctions is a violation regardless of system location or time duration.

Electronics Communication Policy

Users are responsible for all electronic communications originating from their user accounts. This includes email, messaging, discussion postings, chat discussions, and other electronic communication within the MRVED program. Therefore:

- Forgery or attempted forgery of electronic messages is prohibited.
- Attempts to read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic messages of other users are prohibited, unless these actions are part of a specific course assignment.

- Attempts to send harassing, obscene and/or other threatening electronic communications to another user are prohibited. Attempts to send unsolicited junk mail, "for-profit" messages, or chain letters are prohibited.
- In addition, all users will be expected to abide by accepted guidelines of Internet etiquette (Netiquette) in all electronic communications.

Network and System Security

In the normal use of MRVED Online Program resources, users may be allowed to access other networks and/or the computer systems attached to those networks. Therefore:

- Use of systems and/or networks in attempts to gain unauthorized access to remote systems is prohibited.
- Use of systems and/or networks to connect to other systems, in evasion of the physical limitations of the remote system/local, is prohibited.
- Decryption of system or user passwords is prohibited.
- The copying of system files is prohibited.
- The copying, downloading, or unauthorized use of copyrighted materials, such as third-party software or course content, without the express written permission of the owner or the proper license, is prohibited. This provision also applies to the use of pirated software, which is prohibited.
- Intentional attempts to "crash" Network systems or programs are punishable disciplinary offenses.
- Any attempts to secure a higher level of privilege on Network systems are punishable disciplinary offenses.
- The willful introduction of computer "viruses" or other disruptive/destructive programs into the organization network or into external networks is prohibited.

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Appendix J: Federal and State Regulations

STUDENT RECORDS AND PRIVACY PROTECTION

The MRVED Online Program is committed to the secure and appropriate handling of personal information and adheres to the requirements of the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and actively pursues policies and procedures that protect the privacy of student records. The MRVED Online Program will employ physical, electronic, and managerial procedures to safeguard the security and integrity of personal information collected by MRVED Online Program.

In addition:

1. Participating districts will require all students to sign an Acceptable Use Policy which meets the aspects of COPPA (Children's Online Privacy Protection Act) and CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act) required for school districts.
2. The MRVED Online Program will collect the written parental consent for their online students who are age 17 or younger on the Enrollment Form and will verify this consent with the enrolling district, as necessary.

AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) COMPLIANCE

Courses are developed in accordance with federal policies on ADA compliance. ADA compliance follows the universal principles of design. Resources on designing an online course according to these principles and information on providing online services for students eligible for accommodative services are provided in a number of web sites:

The University of Washington's site is a good site for this information:

<http://www.washington.edu/doit/Brochures/Technology/universal.design.html>

EQUITABLE ACCESS

The MRVED Online Program is committed to providing equitable and safe access to the Internet-based resources provided by the MRVED Online Program, including access for disadvantaged and underserved students, and will recommend policies and procedures to ensure that all students can take advantage of the opportunities created by the MRVED Online Program.

Online instructors will make every effort to ensure that the content, approach, and goals of the online education courses meet the needs of all students.

In addition:

1. The student's home district will allow an online student access to the computer hardware and education software available in the school district.
2. The student's home district will insure that all computers supplied for online learning will have appropriate active Internet filtering and blocking technology. All districts will periodically check all computers to insure that this filtering and blocking software is active and meets CIPA requirements.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT

The MRVED Online Program is committed to safeguarding the right of all participants to work and learn in an environment that is free of discrimination or harassment. Discrimination/harassment on the basis of race, color, ancestry, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, or disability in any form will not be tolerated. All schools in the MRVED network have an anti-discrimination policy and procedures for addressing discrimination/ harassment complaints. Compliance with these policies and procedures will be the responsibility of each participating school. Complaints should be filed with the complainant's school and the MRVED Online Program Director, and should follow procedures of the policy for that district. Situations involving two or more schools will require the collaboration of administrators in each of those schools. The MRVED Online Program Director will assist as appropriate.

TITLE VI/IX and OTHER EQUITY LEGISLATION

All schools must be in compliance with all Federal Civil Rights legislation. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects people from discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 insures that no person shall, on the basis of gender, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any federally assisted program. In addition, state civil rights legislation will apply to MRVED Online courses. Compliance with all civil rights legislation will be the responsibility of each school and complaints should be filed with the complainant's school and should follow the school's grievance procedure.

The MRVED Online Program student and family handbook has been adapted, in part, from IDEAL-NM and SOCRATES Online.

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