

**WEBSTER PARISH
SCHOOL BOARD**

P.O. Box 520 - Minden, LA 71058
Phone: 318-377-7052 Fax: 318-371-9098

Tech Connect

Webster Parish School Board Virtual
Instruction Program

2020-2021

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Overview

Webster Parish's Tech Connect program offers high quality, individualized education, through approved digital platforms to all Webster Parish registered students in grades k through 12. Tech Connect is a fully online instructional program intended to be a highly independent, self-motivating work from home program. This virtual environment promotes the development of skills, attitudes, and self-discipline necessary to achieve success in the 21st century. While engaged in online learning through Tech Connect, students are expected to assume an increasing responsibility in their own learning.

Student learning in Tech Connect will be both synchronous (students are face-to-face with the teacher and other students via Google Meet) and asynchronous (students are working independently to preview material through videos or other digital resources, to complete assignments, to complete assessments, etc.). The total time spent in both synchronous and asynchronous learning, although flexible, will be comparable to core content instructional time in a traditional classroom. Student learning in Tech Connect will mirror the course content standards and pacing guidelines for student learning in the face-to-face school setting. Tech Connect learning allows students to earn transferable credits, take recognized examinations, or advance to the next level of education.

This handbook gives general guidance for parents and students enrolled in the Tech Connect virtual program. Tech Connect is a program and is subject to the rules and regulations of the Louisiana Department of Education and Webster Parish School Board. Students enrolled in the Tech Connect Program will still be considered students of their home based school and will, therefore, follow the Webster Parish calendar for test dates, holidays, grading periods, and issuing of report cards.

General Information

Admission Requirements

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, all Admission Requirements and Guidelines set forth by the Webster Parish School Board for Tech Connect are subject to change at any time in accordance with the CDC (Center for Disease Control) guidelines and/or guidelines set forth by the State of Louisiana as it pertains to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Participating in Tech Connect means that the student:

- is simultaneously enrolled both in Tech Connect and his/her local school in accordance to attendance zones and/or approved school transfers by the Supervisor of Student Services;
- agrees to actively participate in the Tech Connect online environment;
- understands that he/she must work independently and is responsible to complete assignments and tasks;
- understands that it must be his/her original work.

Students are able to enroll in the Tech Connect prior to a predetermined deadline before the beginning of the school year. Students have the ability to transfer to the Tech Connect program each nine week period by submitting notification to the school by the end of week 6 of the current grading period. All other transfers are subject to approval by the School Building Level Committee (SBLC) and the Supervisor of Student Services. These will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Parent Expectations

- Adhere to the Webster Parish School Board Student Procedures and Guidelines for Technology.
- Adhere to the guidelines in the [Tech Connect Parent/Student Contract](#).
- A healthy working relationship between the student/parent and the assigned teacher is essential. Parents are required to participate in conferences and class meetings with their student's teacher(s).
- Parents should utilize the Parent Center on their child's home based school website to update any changes in contact information, including phone numbers and email addresses. The student's teacher should also be notified of these changes.
- Parents are encouraged to attend a mandatory orientation prior to the student(s) being enrolled in Tech Connect. Orientation will help both parents to understand the learning platform, virtual environment, procedures, and expectations.
- Parents should understand that some students may need a parent or designee to provide guidance, support, and supervision in order to effectively participate in Tech Connect.
- Behavioral expectations, the Code of Conduct, and all Student Procedures and Guidelines for Technology should be discussed with the student to ensure he/she is aware of the requirements set forth. It is also important that he/she understands the consequences for those who choose not to adhere to the expectations.

Student Expectations

- Adhere to the Webster Parish School Board Student Procedures and Guidelines for Technology.
- Adhere to the guidelines in the [Tech Connect Parent/Student Contract](#).

- Dedicate appropriate time to learning, comparable to a school day and/or as guided by your teacher(s).
- Check appropriate online platforms for information on courses, assignments, and daily resources.
- Attend classes on a daily basis.
- Identify a quiet place to study/learn.
- Engage in all learning posted with academic honesty following standards for participation.
- Submit all assignments in accordance with provided timelines and/or due dates.
- Any campus visits, other than for sports or extracurricular activities, must be pre-approved by the principal or principal designee.

Standards of Participation

Each student enrolled in Tech Connect is solely responsible for the content posted through his/her login and account activity. Sharing of usernames and passwords with other students or using other students' usernames and passwords is strictly prohibited.

The following are strictly prohibited within the virtual learning platform:

- posting personally identifiable information in any format other than a private message to the teacher;
- antagonism or prejudice of any kind with respect to race, religion, gender, intelligence, age, orientation, disability, or socioeconomic status;
- posting material including language, photographs, and videos that are inappropriate;
- any criminal or other illegal activity including encouraging the unlawful use, possession, manufacture, or distribution of tobacco, drugs, or alcohol;
- illegally posting, distributing, uploading, or downloading copyrighted work (whether music, video, words, images, drawings, pictures, software, or otherwise);
- sharing assignments, quizzes, tests, assessments, essays, term papers, questions/answers, or any other action that would violate any code of conduct, expectations, or rules in regards to academic honesty;
- spam or unauthorized, unsolicited, commercial promotion;
- and disruptions of the server or host software;
- any other action administrators feel is inappropriate.

Student integrity in scored assignments and assessments is vital and should be the student's original work.

Students are expected to:

- complete assignments and assessments alone;
- not copy or redistribute any part of the assignment or assessment in any way - electronically, verbally, or on paper;
- take an assessment without any aids - meaning you may not use textbooks, references, or other materials unless instructed to do so by the teacher;
- not work on an assignment for a second course during time set aside for the first;
- not log in on a second device or open course related materials on another browser during assessments;
- not confer with others (students, family members, teachers, or acquaintances)
 - in- person or through electronic communication, during assessments;
- not give or receive help or assistance while working on quizzes, tests, exams, or graded assignments.

Failure to meet the academic honesty and integrity standards will result in disciplinary action.

Dress Code

- Students must be dressed in appropriate clothing conducive to being interactive on video conferencing.
- No offensive or vulgar language should be displayed on clothing that is visible while on camera.
- No sleeping attire.
- During live meetings, student(s) must be seated in front of a blank wall/background in order to limit distractions.

Failure to comply with these standards may result in temporary or permanent removal of user access to live meetings.

Device Loan and Usage

All registered Webster Parish students will be issued a school owned Chromebook for home learning use. Students have the opportunity to purchase the Optional Device Damage Protection Plan for a fee of \$25. This protection plan does not cover the device if it is lost or stolen. Devices will be issued at the beginning of the school year and should be returned to the student's home based school at the end.

Students are subject to the rules and restrictions implemented by the Webster Parish Student Procedures and Guidelines for Technology for all Webster Parish students. All students should be aware of the guidelines and expectations listed in the documents below. Any activity not listed, which violates local, state or federal laws, is considered a violation of the Webster Parish Student Procedures and Guidelines for Technology. These documents are available for download under the Student tab at www.websterpsb.org.

Discipline

Students within the Tech Connect program will be subject to the same disciplinary actions as those on a traditional campus, as they apply to the virtual platform. Please refer to the student handbook for the student's current grade level for this information. The Student Handbook is available under the "Student" tab at www.websterpsb.org.

Attendance

Although Tech Connect is designed and intended to be an at-home virtual learning environment, Webster Parish is required to monitor student attendance in accordance with all applicable statutes set forth by the Louisiana Department of Education. Instruction is computer-based; therefore, students can work anywhere there is an internet connection. The Tech Connect Program requires students to work in their online courses daily to be considered in attendance. Student progress will be monitored closely by their teacher(s). Although flexibility in choosing instructional times is a huge advantage to Tech Connect, students must maintain their progress in all courses and attend live support opportunities with their teacher(s). All Tech Connect students must meet attendance expectations to be considered in good standing.

To be considered in attendance, students must:

- attend a live meeting with their teacher and classmates at a scheduled time *or* view a recording of that day's session once it is made available by the teacher;
- complete and submit all assignments daily by the given deadline;
- dedicate appropriate time to learning, comparable to a school day or as guided by the teacher.

Students in the Tech Connect program are subject to the same attendance policy as those students in the traditional setting as it applies to excused/unexcused absences and truancy. Those policies can be found in the Student Absences and Excuses section of the Student Handbook for that student's grade level. This document can be downloaded from www.websterpsb.org under the student tab.

Students with Disabilities

The Webster Parish School Board (WPSB) will ensure that the implementation of and will follow the requirement of Section 504 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The WPSB will ensure that all students receive an education that includes the requirements as determined by the students' Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP). Individual Education Plans and Individual Accommodation Plans will be reviewed by the IEP/SBLC team. Students will access the general education curriculum, with appropriate accommodations and modifications, as determined by the IEP/SBLC team. Students participating in Tech Connect will also receive appropriate direct and related services per the students' IEPs.

State and District Assessments

Participation in all state and district mandated testing is required for all Tech Connect students. All state testing will adhere to policies and requirements under Bulletin 118.

Video Usage

Live virtual meetings will be recorded by the teacher and shared within the teachers' virtual learning platform for viewing at a later time by students. All students' names will be removed from the video in order to not disclose personally identifying information if at any time live class participants are shown. All parents of students taking part in Tech Connect will be required to consent to this video usage. Videos are for educational purposes only by Webster Parish School Board. Downloading, recording, or sharing of video through any means is prohibited and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Clubs and Athletics

Since Tech Connect is an extension of the students' home base school, students will be allowed to participate in all clubs, athletics, spirit groups, and extracurricular activities. Students who wish to participate in such should contact the home based school.

Elementary Guidance

Educational Day Overview

Students in elementary school who are taking part in Tech Connect will have the opportunity to take part in live classroom activities with a teacher of their grade level and class peers. Live meetings will follow the same schedule daily. All students are encouraged to participate in live sessions as that is the most conducive to the learning process. We do understand that this is not always possible due to multiple circumstances. Please contact your child's teacher for an exact list of days and times for specific activities.

Grade Determination and Promotion/Retention

Grades will be determined for students in the Tech Connect program in the same manner as those in the traditional setting. That grading scale can be found in the student handbook for that student's grade level. That document may be downloaded from the student tab at www.websterpsb.org.

If students in Tech Connect transfer back to a traditional setting, all grades accrued in the virtual setting shall be included in the final grade average.

Policies and guidelines governing Tech Connect are in accordance with regulations set forth in Bulletin 741 and the Webster Parish Pupil Progression Plan.

Elementary Curriculum

The elementary curriculum for the Tech Connect program will mirror that of the traditional setting. All core classes will be taught from the state approved Tier 1 curriculum adopted by the district.

Courses outlined for the courses of study for grades K-2 are:

- Reading: Expeditionary Learning
- Math: Zearn

Courses outlined for the courses of study for grades 3-5 are:

- Reading: Learn Zillion
- Math: Zearn
- Science: Ph.D
- Social Studies: Scope and Sequence

Honors classes will not be offered in grades K-5 in the Tech Connect program.

Assessment

Students participating in Tech Connect must adhere to all currently established guidelines and policies governing district and state assessment. Kindergarten students in Tech Connect are exempt from taking the Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA), but will be required to take all other diagnostics.

Secondary Guidance

Educational Day Overview

Students in secondary school who are taking part in Tech Connect will have the opportunity to take part in live classroom activities with a teacher of their grade level and class peers. Live meetings will follow the same schedule daily. All students are encouraged to participate in live sessions as that is the most conducive to the learning process. We do understand that this is not always possible due to multiple circumstances. Students whose home based school is on a 4-block schedule will remain on a 4- block schedule. Those on a 7-period day will continue having 7 periods. Seniors enrolled in Tech Connect shall have at least 2 credits per semester for a block schedule and at least 4 credits per year for a 7-period schedule. Teachers of virtual classes may or may not be from the student's home based school.

Course Structure for grades 6-8

- All students in grades 6-8 will be required to be in attendance daily for English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies (please see *Attendance* for definition).
- Other classes on the students' schedule will require attendance as scheduled.
- Students who meet certain requirements can request to be excused from daily attendance to class and just receive support for assignments as needed. This request must be approved by the parent and the principal and submitted to the SBLC for final approval.
- Honors classes will not be offered in grades 6-8 in the Tech Connect program.

Course Structure Grades 9-12

- Students who are scheduled in English I, English II, Algebra I, Geometry, American History, or Biology will be required to be in attendance in these classes daily (please see *Attendance* for definition).
- Students who are scheduled for other core and non-core classes will be required to be in attendance as scheduled.
- Students who meet certain requirements can request to be excused from daily attendance to class and just receive support for assignments as needed. This request must be approved by the parent and the principal and submitted to the SBLC for final approval.
- Students in 11th or 12th grade who would like for part of their course study to include a course not offered by the district, may submit a request to the school. Students must understand that this is not a teacher supported course nor is it a graduation requirement.
- Students that qualify for honors classes will be grouped with students in regular courses. Assignments will be scaffolded to constitute their earning honors credit. This assignment differentiation will take place in Google Classroom which allows for this to happen with some anonymity. Students can opt out of the honor's program at the end of the nine week period. If this choice is made, the student will be required to remain in the regular class for the remainder of the school year.

Grade Determination and Promotion/Retention

Grades will be determined for students in the Tech Connect program in the same manner as those in the traditional setting. That grading scale can be found in the student handbook for that student's grade level. That document may be downloaded from the student tab at www.websterpsb.org.

If students in Tech Connect transfer back to a traditional setting, all grades accrued in the virtual setting shall be included in the final grade average.

Policies and guidelines governing Tech Connect are in accordance with regulations set forth in Bulletin 741 and the Webster Parish Pupil Progression Plan.

Assessment

- All exams for courses offered through the Tech Connect will be proctored by the teacher of that class.
- Students participating in Tech Connect must adhere to all currently established guidelines and policies governing district and state assessment.

Definitions

Asynchronous - working on your own to preview material through videos or other digital resources, to complete assignments, etc.

Google Docs, Google Sheets, Google Slides – digital tools used to collaborate, share feedback, and work together with your students in real time on documents, spreadsheets, and presentations

Google Classroom - learning management system teachers use to create assignments, communicate with students, and send feedback all from one place

Google Forms - teacher created forms, quizzes, and surveys to collect and analyze responses

Google Meet – virtual platform that allows synchronous communication for students and teachers through secure video calls and messaging

Hybrid - two days of face-to-face instruction and three days of virtual instruction and independent work from home.

Internet - an electronic communications network that connects computer networks and organizational computer facilities around the world

Major Assignments*- including, but not limited to the following: culminating writing tasks, course projects, unit tests, chapter tests, weekly tests

Minor Assignments*- including, but not limited to the following: exit tickets, checkpoints, weekly quizzes

Parent-refers to parent and/or guardian

Synchronous - face-to-face with the teacher and other students via Google Meet

Tech Connect - Virtual Instructional Program offered to students by Webster Parish School Board

Virtual - occurring or existing exclusively online **(Major and Minor Assignments will vary according to the course and instructor.)*

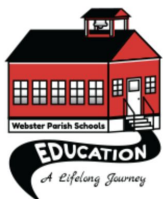
Assistance

Parental Assistance

For any questions you may have regarding the Tech Connect program, please contact your student's home-based school.

For technical assistance with usage of programs, please contact your student's teacher.

For enrollment questions, please contact your student's home-based school.



Webster Parish School Board
Tech Connect Virtual Program
Parent/Student Contract

Student Name: _____ Date: _____
School: _____ Grade: _____

I, _____, on behalf of myself and my child, _____ accept and agree to abide by all rules and expectations set forth in the Webster Parish Tech Connect Virtual Program, including those listed below. I understand that failure to comply with all rules and expectations could result in disciplinary action in accordance with district policy. By my initialing each section below, I verify that I have read over the Tech Connect Handbook and each of the statements listed below, discussed them with my child, and agree to, on behalf of myself and my child, to comply with all.

_____ I agree to protect my username and password. I will not share my login information with others.

_____ I agree to follow all attendance guidelines set forth in the Tech Connect Virtual Program Handbook.

_____ I agree to follow all dress code requirements as outlined in the Tech Connect Virtual Program Handbook.

_____ I agree to abide by all behavioral expectations as they relate to Tech Connect.

_____ I agree to work diligently on my virtual course(s) in order to complete all course requirements and meet all established deadlines set by the teacher

_____ I agree to complete all assignments with academic honesty, with all assignments being completed by me, and understand that a breach of such will result in disciplinary action.

_____ I understand that I may only transfer back to the brick and mortar setting (go to the school for classes) at the end of the 9 week grading period with approval from the School Building Level Committee (SBLC) and the Supervisor of Student Services.

_____ I understand that all live sessions of virtual meetings with my child will be recorded for educational purposes by the school district. Downloading, videoing, or sharing of the content of these meetings, by me or my child, in any way is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

_____ As an integral part of the success of the Tech Connect Virtual Program, I agree to work closely with the teacher(s) to ensure assignments are completed, schedules are met, and students are engaged and motivated.

*In order to take part in the Tech Connect Virtual Program, access to a reliable internet source is mandatory.

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Phone Number: _____ Parent/Guardian's E-mail Address: _____