



2023–2024 Student Handbook

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Welcome

Welcome to URSA (USD 506 Remote Student Academy). URSA is an excellent education option available to students in Kansas. The school and URSA Coordinators assist in educating children using high-quality standards and online curricula.

Introduction

- This is a KSDE-approved virtual-online program. If you seek a chance to earn a high school diploma virtually from an accredited school district, we are here to help you succeed.
- This document is intended to inform the school's parents and students of relevant policies and procedures and identify specific responsibilities for families enrolling in the school.

For all questions regarding policy, procedures, curriculum, or technology your experienced URSA Coordinator is your first point of contact.

Mission Statement

URSA is an innovative community of families, students, teaching adults, and staff committed to empowering our learners to achieve their full potential through high-quality education comprised of

- A rigorous curriculum
- Individualized support
- Dedicated partnerships

in a variety of learning environments.

Course Offerings

imagine edgenuity is a leading provider of core and elective instruction in virtual and blended learning environments for students in grades 7-12. One of the first to support the innovative learning models that facilitate individualized learning for students, *imagine edgenuity* has become one of the largest providers of content in support of

online, hybrid, and blended learning models, which allow teachers to facilitate learning for all students. Emphasizing instructional content in core and elective subjects, *imagine edgenuity's* programs help students recover and accrue credits for graduation, participate in Advanced Placement courses, and prepare for state, end-of-course, and standardized assessments along with tutoring and support for adult education.

Offers courses in:

- Science
- Language Arts
- Math
- Social Studies
- Advanced Placement
- Various Electives

Pacing and Flexibility

- The Online School provides a recommended schedule that will ensure all lessons in each content level are presented and completed in one academic school year's time frame.
- Consistent lesson progression is expected. (10-11% per month is considered typical)
- The Online School is flexible and designed to accommodate all learners.
- Progress data is used by the URSA Coordinators and Learning Coaches to evaluate student progress and learning.
- It is essential that the parent/guardian understand that when they enroll a student in the school, they agree to participate in the program as designed.

School Information

School Year

The traditional school year at URSA is from August 22, 2023, through May 23, 2024. Returning students may work during June and July.

Enrollment

Enrollment in URSA is open only to residents of the State of Kansas. The enrollment process must be fully completed. This includes:

- 7-12 Online Enrollment
- Enrollment Packet Available at www.usd506.org
- Immunization Record
- Proof of Age- official Birth Certificate
- Proof of Residence
- Enrollment Consultations

Failure to complete the enrollment process will result in a denied enrollment with URSA.

A virtual environment is not the appropriate educational setting for every child. It is important to discuss your child's needs with URSA staff members to determine appropriateness.

A student who is serving an expulsion from a school district in Kansas is not permitted to enroll.

Completion of the enrollment packet does not require enrollment or commit the student to attending the school. All students, 7th to 12th grades, are required to fill out the Enrollment Form and Entrance Interview Questionnaire. Students will not be considered enrolled if both documents are not completely filled out and signed. Formal acceptance to the virtual school will be determined by the program coordinator and superintendent of schools upon review of all required documents (i.e., enrollment form and entrance interview questionnaire).

A formal Directed Studies plan will be implemented for all students not "Meeting Standards" on state assessments. Continued enrollment is contingent on adherence to this plan. This plan is discussed and evaluated at each conference.

Probationary Status

Students with poor discipline, academic performance, and excessive absences at their previous school may be laced on probation, which will include the development of a directed study (DS). Students scoring more than one grade level below on placement assessments will also be on probation. The probationary requirements shall be determined on a case-by-case basis by URSA staff. Students on probationary status will be limited to the four core subjects.

Students wishing to re-enroll in URSA after having been withdrawn due to non-compliance of any type (such as lack of progress, lack of communication with the URSA Coordinator, or failure to participate in testing) must seek and obtain approval by administration for re-enrollment.

Special Education Enrollment

(Special Education Enrollments are Due Completed by August 10, 2023)

When a student who receives special education services enrolls in URSA, the parents and/or guardians must provide a current IEP and evaluation to be reviewed by the high school education staff prior to enrollment completion. Failure to provide a current IEP and/or evaluation, if one is available, will result in the denial of the student's enrollment application. If the student's enrollment is accepted and URSA staff later determines the student had an IEP or evaluation that was not shared with URSA staff by parents or guardians, the student's enrollment may be terminated.

When a student with a current IEP enrolls in URS, the parents must agree to a 30-day trial placement (beginning the first day after Labor Day) during which time an assessment/progress monitoring will be completed to determine if URSA curriculum is appropriate for the student. If at the end of the 30-day trial, after having reviewed the data, the URSA special education staff determines that URSA curriculum is not appropriate for the student, URSA will urge parents to pursue other options and provide information regarding another more appropriate setting in the USD 506 school district.

During the 30-day trial placement, the student must be made available for assessment/progress monitoring activities including trial teaching. The student will be required to come to URSA for such scheduled assessment dates. URSA staff will determine the extent to which the student needs to be available for assessment activities. Parents may be required to come to URSA for multiple assessment sessions. Failure to attend scheduled assessments will result in the denial of the student's enrollment application.

If the student has an IEP in the past that has expired, but the child was not exited from special education services, the URSA special education staff will conduct a re-evaluation of that student's needs.

Parents of special education students are required to collect data on the student's progress on a regular basis.

Special Education students will be subject to progression requirements as outlined by their IEP. Special education service time will be determined subject to service providers' schedules. All students qualifying for special education services (including Gifted services) must be enrolled in the four core classes at URSA (Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies).

State Audit

To determine school funding, audits of mandatory student attendance are conducted in September. Failure to fully participate and submit required documentation by the designated date would result in automatic withdrawal from URSA.

Attendance Policies

Students are required to be online for two consecutive six-hour sessions at the beginning of each school year. The first six-hour session must be completed between August 1st and September 20th and the second six-hour session must be

completed between September 21st and October 4th. (The six-hour online session must be completed in the same calendar day.)

Course Finals

Students under 18 are required to take proctored course finals. Course Finals must be scheduled in advance.

Withdrawals

Parents of students who are withdrawing from the school must submit their intentions, including new school information, to their URSA Coordinator. The school will contact parents to arrange for the recovery of all school equipment and materials. Parents/guardians are expected to return all school property within 20 days and in good condition.

Parents/guardians need to provide written verification from the new school within 20 days. Verification is considered to be a request of student records from the new placement or completing a non-accredited private school registration form at the state website. If verification is not received, URSA is required to report the student(s) to the District attorney's office or SRS in the county in which they reside, per the compulsory school attendance law.

Non-accredited private school registration forms may be downloaded from the Kansas Department of Education website:

https://apps.ksde.org/naps_form/default.aspx

Moving Out of State/Country

Students moving out of state or country will need to formally withdraw from URSA.

Change of Information

Parents are responsible for notifying their URSA Coordinator of any changes to address, phone number, or other pertinent information within 10 calendar days. The URSA Coordinators will notify the office of any communicated changes in order to update the student's records.

Technology Needs

Access to a computer and a working phone for conferencing is required. Throughout the year there will be times when access to a printer is also needed.

Internet Connection: acquiring internet service prior to the start of the school year and maintaining it is the responsibility of the family. Issues regarding connection to service should be directed to your Internet service provider. In case of extended interrupted service, you will need to inform your URSA Coordinator. URSA recommends the use of high-speed internet.

- All issues surrounding technology should be reported first to the assigned URSA Coordinator. The URSA Coordinator will then recommend the dissemination of information to the proper source.
- Use of the internet is under the sole supervision of the Learning Coach (i.e., parent/guardian)
- URSA is not responsible for lost data; please store ALL your documents, pictures, etc. on external media (flash drives, disks, etc.)

Supplemental Activities and Curriculum

Learning Coaches (parents/guardians) seeking to provide the best possible education for their student(s) often enrich the curriculum with extra activities, family trips and additional curricula. However, it is important that plans for additional activities and curricula be discussed ahead of time with the assigned URSA Coordinator so as to not interfere with the required curricular objectives. It is also

important to note that additional activities and additional curriculum do *not* replace completion and mastery of the student's core 9-12 lessons.

School Sponsored Events

URSA students are not eligible to attend High School sponsored activities such as school dances, banquets, Prom, etc. Permission to attend these activities will not be given by the administration. These activities, sponsored by the various grade levels and designated sponsors, are privileges given to Labette County High School students.

Required District and State Assessments

Students are required to participate in local and state assessments at their enrolled grade level. All URSA students will be assessed on progress toward benchmarks and state standards using various standardized assessment tools.

- Student attendance and participation in test preparation and scheduled testing is a mandatory requirement for enrollment in URSA.

As a public school, all students enrolled in grades 3 and above must participate in the Kansas State Assessment Program during the state-mandated time frame. Their URSA Coordinators will communicate all testing times, dates, and locations to parents. URSA will provide as much notice as possible to facilitate scheduling and planning. Failure to participate in assessments will be cause for withdrawal from URSA.

A formal ILP and/or Directed Studies plan will be implemented for all students not "Meeting Standards" on state assessments. Continued enrollment is contingent on adherence to this plan.

Objectionable Materials Guidelines/Procedure

There may be times in which a parent/guardian/Learning Coach will have objections to certain lessons, books, or materials. In this case, the URSA Coordinator should be contacted to assure appropriate objectives are covered. The assessment for the lesson(s) must be completed to show that the objectives have been met.

URSA Coordinator (URSA Teacher)

A healthy working relationship between the Learning Coach and your assigned URSA Coordinator is essential. The URSA Coordinator is the first point of contact for all questions about guidelines, curriculum, procedures, or technology. All URSA Coordinators hold a Kansas teaching license, have extensive URSA Coordinator professional development, and represent a diverse spectrum of educational backgrounds and experience. Your URSA Coordinator is the first point of contact for Learning Coaches concerning any issue.

The URSA Coordinator will respond to communications within 24 hours on regular school days. The URSA Coordinator will notify their assigned families if they will be out of their office or unavailable. Additional responsibilities of the URSA Coordinator include but are not limited to:

- Scheduling and conducting conference calls with each Learning Coach
- Instructional and curricular support
- Organizational assistance
- Technical support
- Encouragement and support in all areas of student learning and achievement
- Developing, monitoring and evaluating ILPs and Directed Studies
- Administration of formal and informal assessments
- URSA Coordinator may request work samples to support and affirm the student's academic progress

Progress Reports

One of the many features afforded by the Imagine Edgenuity online curriculum is an up-to-second report of a student's academic progress and attendance information. A parent may log on to the system at any time and view this information. Learning Coaches will receive a progress report each quarter.

Learning Coach (Teaching Adult) Duties

Academic Progress

The school is a mastery-based program and as such, 100% mastery of each content level is strongly encouraged and supported to provide a rich, rigorous, and sequential learning experience for students.

- You are responsible for actively working with your child in their day-to-day learning.
- Mastering approximately 11% of the curriculum in each content area each month will enable students to successfully reach this goal of completing courses within the traditional nine-month school year.
- Mastery of each lesson is based on scoring 70% or more on each lesson assessment. Learning Coaches should re-teach concepts until mastery is achieved. The curriculum has been developed to follow a prescribed sequence. Students should work at mastering the curriculum in the order that lessons are prescribed.
- Students are expected to consistently complete at least four to five lessons in math and language arts per week. URSA Coordinators provide a pacing guide that will ensure all lessons in each content level are presented in one academic school year's time frame.
- Maintain open and honest communications with URSA faculty and staff.
- When requested, Learning Coaches are responsible for submitting requested work samples to the URSA Coordinator in a timely manner. Failure to submit requested items will result in non-compliance.

- Participate in all required assessments (DIBELS, Wiring, State and others as requested).
- Progress data is used by the URSA Coordinators and learning Coch to evaluate student progress and learning.
- Additional recommendations for beneficial scheduling, working with multiple children and appropriate progress goals for each student may be obtained from the student's URSA Coordinator.

Course Placement and Advancement

New students will be placed in appropriate-level courses based on placement exam results along with all other information provided by the parent/guardian. All new students are required to take placement exams in all subjects. A student's grade level placement will be based on prior grade level completion and age. The placement team in consultation with the family will handle all placement decisions.

Academic Progress Guidelines

It is essential that the parent/guardian understands that when they enroll a student in the school, they agree to participate in the program as designed and actively engage in their child's daily learning. Multiple non-compliances may result in termination.

Academic Engagement: Non-Compliance Procedure

Note: The following procedure will not be initiated when extreme instances or legitimate excuses have been communicated to and agreed upon by the student's URSA Coordinator (extended illness of the student, parent, or Primary Adult, planned vacations, internet connection issues, etc.). The special education team will determine appropriate engagement for special education students.

While the majority of our families are committed to educational excellence, there are instances in which a student may be considered lacking in appropriate academic progress. When students do not meet the minimum progress goals the staff will follow the procedure outlined below to notify the Learning Coach of a student's lack of progress.

Steps to improve academic progress

Step 1: The URSA Coordinator will notify the Learning Coach and Administration of students who fail to meet the minimum academic engagement. (Notice 1)

Step 2: Upon receipt of notification, the Learning Coach will participate in a scheduled conference call to identify the issues causing the lack of engagement and develop an ILP or Directed Study Plan to re-engage learning and meet suitable academic goals to ensure the success of the student. The student will then be expected to show academic engagement.

Step 3: In the event the student does not engage according to stipulations in step 2, the URSA Coordinator will notify the administration with documentation pertinent to the student including progress history, participation in required activities, and applicable conference notes.

Step 4: The administration will notify the parent/guardian via US Postal Service regarding non-compliance. The Learning Coach will be responsible for contacting their URSA Coordinator and clarifying their intentions regarding enrolment in URSA. (Notice 2)

Step 5: In the event that the Learning Coach does not respond to communication or the student does not re-engage in the school as designed in step 2, the administration will issue a 'Notice of Termination' letter to the parent/guardian and the child's enrollment will be terminated. (Notice 3, Final)

Communication

Communication Guidelines

In a virtual model, consistent and appropriate communication between the Learning Coach and the URSA Coordinators is essential for the success of the program. The sole responsibility for communication compliance between school and home lies with the Learning Coach. Methods of communication include telephone, face-to-face, email, etc.

Learning Coaches are responsible for:

- Conferencing
 - Conferencing between Learning Coaches and the URSA Coordinator are vital and integral pieces of the education model provided by the school. Conferencing provides a personal venue between URSA Coordinator and Learning Coaches to discuss each student's academic progress and success and to provide support for the Learning Coaches in implementation of the curriculum, instructional methods, management ideas, etc. An URSA Coordinator will schedule conference methods and sessions. Learning Coaches are responsible to be available for these scheduled conferences. It is the responsibility of the Learning Coach to notify their URSA Coordinator 24 hours prior to the scheduled conference if they will not be available, so an alternate date may be determined.
- Email
 - Email is the primary communication platform for the URSA Coordinators, Learning Coaches, and administration. The majority of information needing to be communicated to URSA families will be sent via their assigned email account. Often, the information is time-sensitive and many items require a specific response. Therefore:
 - Learning Coaches are required to use email as a condition of enrollment.
 - Learning Coaches are responsible for checking their email daily.

- Learning Coaches are responsible for replying promptly to any email requests received from URSA staff.

Communication: Non-Compliance Procedure

A parent will be considered to be non-compliant with the school's communication policy when an URSA Coordinator is unable to reach the Learning Coach during a 2-week period of time. This includes unsuccessful attempts by the URSA Coordinator to interact with the Learning Coach via conference calls, email, and/or communication delivered to the parent's home address.

Step 1: The URSA Coordinators will notify the Learning Coach of failure to meet the minimum communication requirements. (Notice 1)

Step 2: Upon receipt of notification, the Learning Coach will participate in a scheduled conference to identify the issues causing the lack of communication and to develop an appropriate communication plan.

Step 3: In the event the Learning Coach does not follow the communication plan in step 2, the URSA Coordinator will notify the administration with appropriate documentation.

Step 4: The administration will notify the parent/guardian via US Postal Service regarding non-compliance. The Learning Coach will be responsible for contacting their URSA Coordinator and clarifying their intentions regarding enrollment in URSA. (Notice 2)

Step 5: In the event that the Learning Coach does not respond to communication and follow the communication plan, the administration will issue a 'Notice of Termination' letter to the parent/guardian and student enrollment will be terminated. (Notice 3)

Professionalism

All communication between the administration, URSA Coordinators, Learning Coaches, students, and other parties directly related to the school must be conducted with appropriate professionalism. Demeaning language, foul language,

and derogatory remarks/innuendos are not acceptable. This includes communication during phone conferences and communication via email. Acting in an unprofessional manner may result in termination of enrollment.

Graduation Requirements

Number of Credits

A total of 25 credits are required to earn a general high school diploma from Labette County High School. A full unit of credit (1.0) is defined as one hour of class that consists of one full year (36 weeks) of content. These credits consist of: 4 credits of Language Arts (English 9, 10, 11, 12 or an approved Language Arts course); 3 credits of Mathematics (one must be Algebra I); 3 credits of Science; 3 credits of Social Science (World History, U.S. History, and Government); 1 credit of Physical Education; 1 credit of Fine Arts; 10 credits of Electives.

Grievance Guidelines

As problems arise, school personnel and Learning Coaches agree that they must work together to solve them. For assistance in resolving a problem, please first direct all concerns, issues, and questions to your child's URSA Coordinator (you can set up an appointment by phone or email). If the concern is not resolved at this level, please follow the Grievance Policy below.

Grievance Guidelines and Procedure

The school is interested in achieving and fostering both employee and student/family satisfaction. The following procedure was developed to ensure that the employee and student/family grievances are addressed fairly by the appropriate persons in a timely manner. The school prohibits discrimination against its

employees and students/families on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, or ancestry. The time frame for all appeals by employees and students/parents in the process is ten (10) school days unless otherwise determined by state or federal law.

The student and Learning Coach(es), custodian(s), or legal guardians(s), will address in writing, appropriately labeled, any concern or grievance initially with the student's URSA Coordinator. Such person shall respond within ten (10) school days.

If the concern or grievance is not resolved by the URSA Coordinator, the student and Learning Coach(es), custodian(s), or legal guardian(s) may, within ten (10) school days, request in writing a meeting (via phone or in person) with the URSA Coordinator and administration to discuss the concern or grievance. he/she shall investigate and respond within ten (10) school days.

In the event that the response of the Administrator is not satisfactory, the student and Learning Coach(es), custodian(s), or legal guardian(s) may, within ten (10) school days, participate in mediation or request a review with the District Assigned School Liaison. He/she shall investigate and respond within ten (10) school days.

Members of the public, parents, URSA Coordinators, students, and others, may submit a complaint in writing, by fax, in person, by email, or by regular US mail to the Administrative Office.