Middle and High School Student and Family Handbook

Updated: Spring 2021

BELLINGHAM VIRTUAL LEARNING

Bellingham Public Schools
a collective commitment

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Introduction and BVL contacts

Welcome to our community of online learners! Our goal is to help you be successful in your online courses, so we developed this guide to help you get started as a Bellingham Virtual Learning (BVL) student, or to help you and your family determine if taking online courses is right for you.

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Learn more about BVL

Bellingham Virtual Learning (BVL) is a web-based educational program of the Bellingham Public Schools. It provides instructor-led online courses to high school students who want to learn remotely. BVL uses the learning platform called Edgenuity. BVL courses and learning are asynchronous; asynchronous courses and asynchronous learning means that students move through courses at their own pace and are not bound by scheduled class periods. However, students are expected to log in every day and complete course work. BVL is an ideal environment for a motivated learner who seeks the independence of completing coursework that runs "parallel" with the Bellingham Public Schools high school curriculum, and/or wants to learn asynchronously and be remote.

The Edgenuity software platform provides flexibility in accessing coursework in research-based content with certificated teachers instructing through videos and 100% online courses. Students and families who choose BVL must note that these courses follow a quick pace, require regular daily participation, and are at least as rigorous if not more so than a traditional classroom course. In order to earn credit, it is imperative that students remain self-motivated, disciplined, and consistent within each course to ensure that all assignments and requirements are completed on time. Students work at their own pace

from home with a supervising adult at their neighborhood school as their main contact/point person. This person facilitates instruction, uses reporting tools to monitor student progress, and ensures continued movement through the course(s).

Students are expected to complete 100% of each course in order to earn credit.

What courses are offered through BVL?

Please see pages 6-7 for available high school classes and 8-9 for available middle school classes for spring 2021, or visit *bellinghamschools.org/programs/ online-learning-bvl*

How are BVL classes similar and different from in-person classes?

Unlike classes taught synchronously, either in-person or via Zoom/Teams, online courses rarely ever meet with an instructor. Students in online courses move through the curriculum asynchronously without following a defined bell or period schedule. All communication and learning is done electronically through electronic assignments, email, Zoom, blogs, and other electronic tools. Like an in-person class, there is a state-approved curriculum that the instructor guides students through during the semester.

What qualities help make a student successful with BVL classes?

Students who do well taking asynchronous online courses typically demonstrate the following:

- Good study habits
- Independent learning skills
- Enjoyment of reading and writing
- Ability to problem-solve and work through frustrations
- Solid organizational skills
- Intrinsic motivation
- Willingness to take notes during lessons. Generally, these notes can be used on tests and quizzes and other activities

It's important to note that online courses are not for everyone. Students have to schedule time to work on their courses in order to be successful.

Middle school students can expect to spend 3-4 hours per course per week, while high school students can expect around 5 hours per course per week.

Taking an online course is not necessarily easier than taking an in-person class. But it can provide more flexibility for a learner given its asynchronous format.

Students who struggle with time management, course completion and self-motivation are not good candidates for BVL. Additionally,

Edgenuity coursework requires copious amounts of reading so students who are significantly behind grade level readers may struggle to complete the academic content on their own.

Is BVL a good fit for students who have an IEP or are in other support classes, like ELL?

The best way to answer this is to carefully read through the profile of what makes a student successful with online classes. As with any student considering an online course, it is also best to talk to parents/guardians and have conversations with your school support team, such as school counselors, IEP teacher, ELL teacher, etc. These decisions are best made as a team and on a case-by-case basis.

What is the role of counselors and other staff?

High school: High school counselors are responsible for ensuring students' online courses meet district and state requirements for earning a high school diploma. The student success coordinator at each high school will help students get set up with their online course(s) and orient them to Edgenuity, etc. Each high school has a BVL team that support its BVL students.

Middle school: Middle school registrars and/or a BVL support teacher will register students for the appropriate

grade-level core courses in BVL. Students may also choose an optional enrichment course through Edgenuity or, under some circumstances, through the neighborhood school. Each middle school has a BVL teacher or team of teachers to support BVL students.

Can I take any course(s) I want?

Bellingham Public Schools reserves the right to limit courses to students. Please see the course lists in this handbook or on our website for available middle and high school courses.

If you have questions about any of the courses or wish to sign up, please contact your high school counselor or middle school administrator. Since staffing for these courses is based on enrollment in BVL, we ask that families make at least a one-semester commitment to the BVL program.

Do I need my own personal computer to take an online course?

Students are not required to have their own personal device. Bellingham Public Schools provides each student enrolled in BVL with a laptop.

How do I earn high school credit?

The ONLY way to earn credit via Edgenuity is by completing an entire contracted course. Students can earn credit at their own pace and can rapidly advance if determined to put in the time to do so. A typical pace would be to earn 0.25 - 0.5 credit every 9 weeks (if student worked approximately one hour daily in a class). Students may work ahead and earn credit faster; however, it does require self-motivation and time management. We recommend that students focus on no more than two or three courses at a time and then begin the next course as soon as they finish one. If a student is struggling, do not wait to get help! Students should contact their supervising teacher or BVL contact right away for ideas, support or assistance.

How do I complete a middle school course?

Middle school students are enrolled in four core courses per semester: English Language Arts, math, science and social studies. They can also add an optional enrichment course. The program will assign work to the student each day for each class, based on the semester calendar. Work is not assigned on weekends, holidays or breaks. If a student is sick or does not work, the assignments are still due. Students must complete 100% of the assigned content with a 70% or better overall score in order to complete a course. BVL support staff will work with students to help them with content support, any needed curriculum modifications, and with keeping on task.

How are high school courses graded?

High school BVL courses earn grades of A, B, C, D, INC (Incomplete) and NC (No Credit). They are not graded on a growth model. Students need to pass their BVL courses by completing 100% of the course and pass with a 60% or higher. If students do not complete the course at the end of a semester and earn an INC, they may continue working on the course the next grading period. Students who do zero work in their BVL course will receive NC on their transcript.

BVL High School Grading Scale

A	100	92.00
A-	91.99	90.00
B+	89.99	87.00
B	86.99	82.00
B-	81.99	80.00
C+	79.99	77.00
C	76.99	72.00
C-	71.99	70.00
D	69.99	60.00
INC	59.99	.01
NC	0.0	0.0
Updated 12/2020		

Note: In order to earn a letter grade and credit using this scale, students must have attempted all assignments, projects, quizzes, and tests/assessments for the course.

How are middle school courses graded?

Middle school grades in Bellingham Public Schools are based on meeting standard on a 4, 3, 2, 1 scale. If a student completes all work for a course with 70% scores they will earn at least a 3. Other standards-based scores may be assessed based on individual circumstances.

How can families support students taking BVL classes?

- All courses require internet access. If your family needs assistance with internet access, please contact your school.
- Set up a Family Portal and learn how to monitor your student's online progress, check grades, etc.
- Find out when teachers are available for student support and what options exist for extra help.
- Ensure your student is making adequate progress each week.
- Know how often your student should log in during the day.
- Make sure you and your student know what the requirements are for the course.
- Assist in creating a daily routine and organization system for your student.
- Students may need to set aside extra time to complete assignments.
- Designate a comfortable place free from distractions as a work area for your student.

High School Courses offered through Edgenuity | Spring 2021

ENGLISH - Common Core ELA
English Language Arts 9A
English Language Arts 9B
English Language Arts 10A
English Language Arts 10B

MATH - Common Core Math
Algebra 1A
Algebra 1B
Geometry A
Geometry B

English Language Arts 11A
English Language Arts 11B
English Language Arts 12A
English Language Arts 12B
SOCIAL STUDIES
WA - Modern World History A
WA – Modern World History B
WA - US History A
WA – US History B
WA – Civics- semester only
Social Studies Electives:
WA – Contemporary World Probs A
WA – Contemporary World Probs B
WA – Economics (semester course)
WA – Psychology A
WA – Psychology B
Sociology (semester course)

Algebra 2A
Algebra 2B
MATH Electives:
Pre-Calculus A Sem 1
Pre-Calculus B Sem 1
Financial Math A   Sem 1
Financial Math B   Sem 2
Concepts in Probability & Stats A
Concepts in Probability & Stats B
Trigonometry (full year course)
PE & HEALTH
Lifetime Fitness (semester course)
Contemporary Health-semester course
Found. of Pers. Wellness A
Found. of Pers. Wellness B
TECH CONNECTIONS (0.5)
Computer Applications-Office 2016

SCIENCE	ELECTIVES: (each course is 0.5 credit)
WA - Biology A	Business Law
WA – Biology B	Intro into Coding
Environmental Sci A	Keyboarding & Applications
Environmental Sci B	Healthy Living
WA – Chemistry A	Medical Terminology
WA – Chemistry B	Career Management
WA – Physics A	Intro to Careers in Education & Training
WA – Physics B	Strategies for Academic Success
FINE ARTS	Food Safety & Sanitation
Intro to Art A	Other:
Intro to Art B	

For more information about high school courses or to sign up for BVL, contact your high school counselor at your neighborhood school

Middle School BVL courses | Spring 2021

6th Grade	X
MS BVL Common Core ELA 6 A	
MS BVL Common Core ELA 6 B	
MS BVL Common Core Math 6 A	
MS BVL Common Core Math 6 B	
MS BVL Earth Science A	
MS BVL Earth Science B	
MS BVL World History A	
MS BVL World History B	
7th Grade	**X**
MS BVL Common Core ELA 7 A	
MS BVL Common Core ELA 7 B	
MS BVL Common Core Math 7 A	
MS BVL Common Core Math 7 B	
MS BVL Life Science A	
MS BVL Life Science B	
MS BVL Wash. State History (semester)	
8th Grade	**X**
MS BVL Common Core ELA 8 A	
MS BVL Common Core ELA 8 B	
MS BVL Common Core Math 8 A	

Electives (Edgenuity):	X
MS BVL Lifetime Fitness	
MS BVL Online Learning and Digital Citizenship	
MS BVL Career Explorations	
MS BVL Introduction to Art	
MS BVL Keyboarding and Application	
Neighborhood-School-Based Electives:	**X**
Orchestra	
Band	

(8th grade continued next page)

MS BVL Common Core Math 8 B	
MS BVL Physical Science A	
MS BVL Physical Science B	
MS BVL US History A	
MS BVL US History B	
Off Grade-Level Math Placement Alternative	
MS BVL Algebra 1 A	
MS BVL Algebra 1 B	

For more information about middle school courses or to sign up for BVL, please contact your middle school administrator at your neighborhood school.

BVL Student Behavior Expectations

All Bellingham Public Schools policies and procedures are in effect for BVL students.

Additionally, we have some expectations specific to working together in the online environment.

BVL "Netiquette" Guidelines

Online and network etiquette (sometimes called "netiquette") exists in the wide world of computers. Perhaps just as important as real-world manners, netiquette rules are necessary because readers draw inferences from your words rather than nonverbal body language. Be aware that teachers and administrators have complete access to your communications. All postings within the email system or the class discussion area are public. Any inappropriate use of email or communication within the course will result in administrative action. Email messages should generally be written in a more formal manner than instant messaging but not as rigid as a business letter.

Appropriate language is required. This looks like the following:

- Show respect for your fellow students and instructors.
- Grammar and punctuation should be consistent with rules of English. For example, capitalize the first letter of a sentence, correct spelling, use punctuation marks, etc.

- Do not capitalize all letters when writing as this means you are shouting!
- Refrain from using abbreviations or use sparingly as a reader may not be able to decipher what it means. (For example: BRB –Be Right Back)
- You may use emoji or emoticons to express feelings but remember there is no substitute for a clearly written email.
- Always add your first and last name to your communications.
- Please do not send chain letters or spam material of any nature to your teachers or fellow students.
- And, finally, think before you send, as you cannot un-send electronic communication.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity and honesty are paramount to online courses just as they are to in-person classes. Students enrolled in a BVL online courses are expected to conduct themselves honorably with regards to academics. This includes, but is not limited to, refraining from all forms of cheating, including academic dishonesty and plagiarism. Violations

may result in loss of credit on assignment or for the entire course. Violations will also result in parent/guardian contact and documentation in the students discipline file. Chronic violations of academic dishonesty or extreme cases may result in further action such as removal from the BVL program.

For more information regarding cheating and plagiarism, see our district policy and procedure 3240. Excerpts are below:

> *Cheating, plagiarizing, or turning in another person's papers, projects, electronic-generated products as one's own work or enabling misrepresentation to occur is a violation of Bellingham Public Schools rules.*

> *The inappropriate use of electronic devices to give/obtain answers or to promote or aid in cheating and/or plagiarism or other forms of dishonesty is prohibited.*

BVL contacts:

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