

Merrillville Community School Corporation Virtual Program [7th – 12th grade]

Under the direction of the Merrillville Community School Corporation Board of School Trustees, for the 2021 – 2022 school year, the Merrillville Community School Corporation will offer a Virtual Program designed to serve students in grades 7th – 12th who meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Documented medical or emotional reason - and/or
- Alternative placement based on 504 or IEP- and/or
- Be in good academic standing – and
- Good attendance during the 2020-21 virtual or in-person experience.

The 7th – 12th grade virtual online educational platform will be facilitated by Edmentum/EdOptions. Edmentum/EdOptions is an online program designed to meet the needs of students who wish to conduct their education away from a traditional school building. Students will receive instruction from certified teachers via online in the Core area subjects of English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, and introductory Encore area subjects will be made available to students. EdOptions' teachers are state certified and trained in online teaching. Students will engage in live lesson and collaborative group activities; online teachers will conduct live help sessions for all students in need of additional academic help. Students will be provided with detailed feedback and guidance on assignments and assessments.

High-quality instruction includes a clear objective/teaching point, opportunities for interaction and practice, and the ability for students to respond in multiple ways (reading, writing, listening, speaking). High quality instruction is engaging, and provides multiple access points and scaffolds to move all students to the learning objective. Delivery of instruction to students will be facilitated in both synchronous and asynchronous formats through Google Meet or ZOOM. Intentionally designed formative assessment and checks for understanding into the instructional process to provide feedback about progress students are making toward prioritized learning outcomes in Core area classes will be ongoing throughout the trimester. **Please note that all mandatory state and school corporation assessments must take place in person at the students' school site.**

Please be advised that some Core area and Encore area classes will only be available in person; therefore, students will be required to engage in a blended learning experience in order to fulfill their Indiana State academic requirements in order to graduate from high school or be promoted to the next grade level. The *Merrillville Community Schools Blended Learning Experience* creates opportunities for students to be able to engage in a blended learning environment for specific academic base programs in order to fulfill standards of learning and graduation requirements. We have identified programs based on academic requirements and hands-on experience mandates in which specific students will benefit from in a blended learning educational platform during the trimester. Please contact your students' school for additional information.

Tentative Enrollment Process

Parents/Guardians of students in (7th – 12th grades) who meet the specific requirements, may enroll in MCSC Virtual Program once online registration begins (***TBD 2021***). The process for enrollment into the virtual program must be completed by the parents/guardians of the student. Parents/Guardians of students will have the flexibility to choose which academic option meets the needs of their student(s), but these changes will only take place at the beginning of each trimester. (If, for some unforeseen reason, a family would like to switch into or out of the in-person traditional schooling, they must schedule an appointment with the virtual program advisor, school building guidance counselor and school building administrator to discuss the reason for the request and the potential impact on a student’s learning path). Parents are able to opt out of the virtual program in order for their child to be placed in a traditional classroom during the first week of the trimester. After the first week, students will remain enrolled in the option of their initial placement.

Attendance

We have learned during the 2020-21 school year that detailed monitoring of attendance is one of the most important ways schools can account for student engagement and wellbeing during a pandemic across any instructional model. Research and data will show that there is a strong relationship between attendance and student achievement.

Daily attendance in the MCSC Virtual Program is required. Three or more unexcused absences will result in the student being placed on an attendance improvement plan. Students will be required to log into the virtual platform daily for attendance and attend all synchronous and asynchronous virtual classes for which he or she may be scheduled. (**Note: Students who fail to comply with the attendance guidelines or fail to progress academically may be required to return to in person learning at their school site.**)

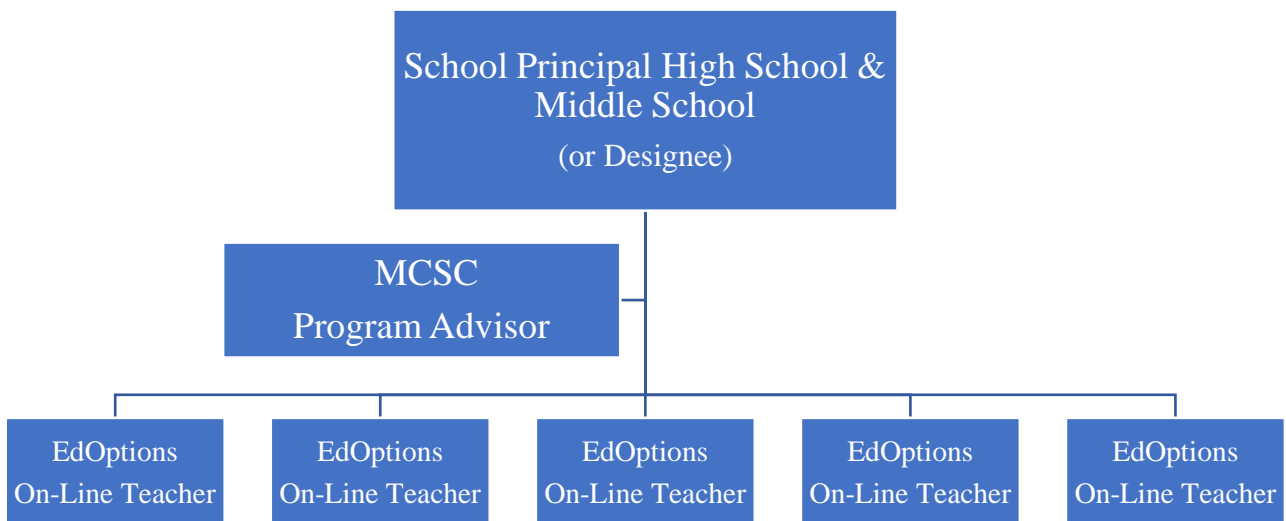
Total time targets for students to be engaged in daily work, including direct instruction, practice, and independent assignments include:

7 th -8 th grade	9 th grade Academy	9 th - 12 th grade
6 hours 35 - 40 min per course	6 hour 50 - 60 min per course	6 hours 40 - 45 min per course



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Organizational Chart



Note: *MCSC will work with our students and families, and collaborate with Edmentum/EdOptions to ensure that our students are provided with the best opportunity of a high quality, engaging, and rigorous education experience in an online setting. All classes under the MCSC Virtual Program at the 7th – 12th grade levels will be taught by EdOptions on-line teachers.*