

IGNITE DIGITAL ACADEMY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Updated 8.20.21

WHAT IS THE IGNITE DIGITAL ACADEMY?

Ignite Digital Academy is a virtual school option for students in K-12th grades within the Little Rock School District. The goal of the Ignite Digital Academy is to provide students a flexible learning option with enriching learning experiences that target individual student needs.

WHO IS A GOOD CANDIDATE FOR IGNITE?

Ignite Digital Academy is an exceptional opportunity for students who have thrived as a virtual student during the 2020-2021 school year or for students who may need to continue to attend school virtually during the 2021-2022 school year for various reasons.

Research suggests successful **elementary (K-6)** virtual students tend to have the following traits and supports:

SYNCHRONOUS (SCHEDULED) LEARNERS	ASYNCHRONOUS (FLEXIBLE) LEARNERS
Punctual Self-motivated Self-disciplined Organized Committed Active/Engaged Participant Ability to seek adult support when needed	Self-motivated Self-starter Self-disciplined Organized Committed Reflective Learn independently Continuous adult support

Research suggests successful **secondary (7-12th)** virtual students tend to have the following traits and supports:

SYNCHRONOUS (SCHEDULED) LEARNERS	ASYNCHRONOUS (FLEXIBLE) LEARNERS
Punctual Self-motivated Self-disciplined Organized Computer literate Strong commitment Learn independently Strong reader Strong parental support	Self-motivated Self-starter Self-disciplined Organized Computer literate Strong commitment Learn independently Strong reader Strong parental support

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SYNCHRONOUS AND ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING?

There is flexibility in being a virtual student by the nature of the way that students “attend school”; however, students enrolled in LRSD’s Ignite Digital Academy have a choice between synchronous (scheduled) or asynchronous (flexible) learning options. This allows parents/students to choose a learning method that best fits the needs of the student.

Synchronous Learning (Scheduled)

Synchronous virtual students will follow a daily schedule and will have regular video conferencing class sessions that will allow the students in the class and the teacher to interact in real-time. Teachers will deliver instruction, facilitate class discussions, and interact with students in real-time using a video conferencing application. Students will use Schoology to access additional instructional resources and submit assignments.

Asynchronous Learning (Flexible)

Asynchronous students will access pre-recorded teacher-led instructional videos, and interact with the teacher and other students in the class using a variety of methods (i.e. email, discussion boards, message threads via Schoology, etc.). Students will use Schoology to access additional instructional resources and submit assignments.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS FOR THE DISTRICT’S DIGITAL ACADEMY?

Student Perspective

Flexibility (i.e. students who have to work, teenage parents, physical/emotional conditions that prohibit them from thriving in an in-person setting, choice in individualized learning path, meets the need of a

home-bound student even on a temporary basis, ensures a learning environment for those students who have failed to thrive in a brick and mortar setting, provides a local/public option for students to be a part of LRSD who would have previously had to choose a charter or private virtual school)

Teacher Perspective

Flexible scheduling, option for certified/qualified teachers who have a medical condition to continue serving students, avenue to learn/use innovative instructional methods, staff could **become trainers or “model program” for effectively integrating technology, ability to focus and best serve student needs in one set instructional delivery method)**

WHO MAY APPLY?

Any K-12 student who lives within Pulaski County may apply for LRSD’s Digital Academy. Students who attended school as a virtual student during the 2020-2021 school year must have received passing grades in core subjects (Language Arts, Reading, and Math), have had satisfactory attendance, and not been retained the previous school year.

HOW DO I APPLY?

The IGNITE Digital Academy application period closed for the 2021-22 school year on Sunday, August 15, 2021. The application period for 2022-23 will open December 1, 2021 and last through December 10, 2021.

CAN MY STUDENT RETURN TO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION DURING THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR?

Yes, virtual students will be allowed to return to their home school site at the end of the first semester of the 2021-2022 school year or they may elect to remain virtual for the entire year.

See the applicable grade level plan for additional details regarding the intervention for students who may begin to struggle academically in the virtual setting. Please note, if students do not maintain a 70% in all core subject areas they will be provided additional support before being dismissed from the Digital Academy and assigned back to in-person instruction.

WILL MY STUDENT LOSE HIS/HER SEAT AT THE SCHOOL TO WHICH HE/SHE IS ALREADY ASSIGNED FOR THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR?

If you elect to attend the Digital Academy, you will be required to remain a virtual student for either the fall semester of the 2021-2022 school year or the virtual student may elect to attend virtually for the full year. A seat at your current 2021-22 assigned school will be reserved for ONE calendar year at your school of record at the time you selected the virtual option.

Virtual students who elect to remain virtual for the entire school year (21-22) must register if they intend to return to in-person instruction for the next school year (22-23) during the normal open enrollment period in December 2021. If you fail to elect to return at that time, you will forfeit your seat at your previously assigned school for the next school year.

WHY DOES MY STUDENT'S PROFILE SHOW ANOTHER SCHOOL OTHER THAN MY ASSIGNED SCHOOL?

The Virtual students will be switched to another district LEA (school) to support the fidelity of instruction. As promised, students who have selected the virtual platform will have their seat reserved at their attendance zone school for the balance of this school year.

WHEN DO I HAVE TO LET LRSD KNOW I AM NOT GOING TO BE VIRTUAL FOR THE 22/23 SCHOOL YEAR?

A. Students will need to identify their intentions during the open enrollment period the first two weeks of December. We will provide the platform for notifying LRSD. Please be aware that any parent who fails to respond will automatically remain virtual and will lose their reserved seat.

IF I AM ON THE WAITING LIST FOR IGNITE, WILL MY CHILD BE MARKED ABSENT?

A. According to Arkansas Code Title 6 education 6-18-213, **YES**, they will be marked absent. There are no ADE waivers this year.

IF I AM ON THE WAITING LIST FOR IGNITE, WILL MY CHILD BE REPORTED TO TRUANCY COURT?

A. According to Title 6 education 6-18-222, **YES**, after 10 days they will be referred. The state has no waivers this school year.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT PLANS TO SUPPORT STUDENTS ON THE WAITING LIST WHILE STAFFING IS ADJUSTED?

If approved by the Board next week (August 26, 2021) the District will assign students on the waiting list to Pearson Online & Blended Learning.

HOW MANY STUDENTS WILL BE IN MY STUDENT'S VIRTUAL CLASS?

Elementary virtual class size-
K- 1st grades (25 students),
2nd – 3rd grades (30 students)
4th – 5th grades (35 students)
6th grade (40 students)
Secondary virtual class size-
7th – 12th grades (40 students per section/class with a 170 total student max per teacher.)

IS THERE A FEE TO ATTEND THE DIGITAL ACADEMY?

No, there is no charge to attend the Digital Academy. Students will need to purchase normal school supplies for use at home (i.e. paper, pencils, color pencils, pens, etc.). Digital Academy teachers will provide a general school supply list for all students. Students enrolled in the Digital Academy will be

assigned a district owned Chromebook to use to complete school work. If internet access is needed, a hotspot will also be provided to complete school work only. Parents are strongly encouraged to purchase Chromebook insurance to protect the district owned device from theft and/or damage.

WHO DO I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT CHROMEBOOKS, HOTSPOTS AND OTHER TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING TECHNICAL SUPPORT?

Contact the digital principal at your child's school:
Millicent Sanders-Anderson (K-6)– 447-2800
Karen Heatherly (7-12) – 447-6510

WILL TEACHERS BE REQUIRED TO TEACH BOTH IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL STUDENTS?

No, classroom teachers will not be required to teach both in-person and virtual students at the same time. Teachers will be hired to teach Digital Academy students. Digital Academy teachers may teach both synchronous (scheduled) and asynchronous (flexible) students depending on the enrollment numbers.

WILL STUDENTS BE REQUIRED TO COME TO THE ACADEMY FACE-TO-FACE AT ANY TIME IN THE SCHOOL YEAR?

Yes, Digital Academy students will be required to take both district and state mandated tests in person at the Digital Academy under the supervision of the Digital Academy certified staff. A testing schedule will be provided for all Digital Academy grade levels before the start of the school year.

Additional assessments may also require a virtual student to come to the Digital Academy depending on the need(s) of each student and the applicable supportive service requirements.

MEALS

The Little Rock School District's Child Nutrition team provides meals for in-person and virtual students. Parents may pick up meals at any school location and must present student's name and identification number?

WILL DIGITAL ACADEMY STUDENTS GET TO PARTICIPATE IN ATHLETICS AND/OR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES?

Yes, Digital Academy students are eligible to participate in athletic and extracurricular activities that are offered/sponsored by their in-person school of record. Digital Academy students must meet the same eligibility requirements as traditional in-person students must meet for the applicable athletic team and/or extracurricular.

