

FOSTER-GLOCESTER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
FOSTER-GLOCESTER, RHODE ISLAND
VIRTUAL AND ONLINE LEARNING POLICY

Philosophy and Intent

The purpose of this policy is to support the mission of the Foster-Glocester Regional School District (FGRSD) by affording each graduate the opportunity to be well prepared for post-secondary education, careers, and citizenship within a global knowledge-based digital society. This policy is intended to provide our students a competitive edge by providing opportunities for students to access courses in the Ponaganset Academy System and to demonstrate their proficiency with multiple measures in accordance with FGRSD Graduation Policies which are designed to:

- 1) Graduate students proficient in 21st Century Skills and work habits needed for success in a knowledge-based global society;
- 2) Provide flexible college and career pathways that lead to post-secondary credit and/or industry certification and/or advanced standing;
- 3) Provide personalized digital learning experiences that
 - a. develop students' intellectual core, 21st Century Skills and work habits,
 - b. enable them to use technology innovatively and collaboratively to acquire, organize, analyze, and communicate information,
 - c. require them to produce original work with precision and accuracy;
- 4) Prepare students for careers in high demand and/or high growth areas in the local and global labor markets by offering rigorous courses and programs in these areas.

This policy is intended to align our graduation policies, curricula, program of study offerings, instructional opportunities, and flexible pathways with the requirements of the RI Board of Education's Virtual Learning Regulations and the RI General Law 16-22.1 – The Statewide Virtual Education Act - which includes the following legislative findings: "Students in Rhode Island's public elementary, secondary, and postsecondary schools and institutions should be able to take advantage of as many opportunities as possible to support and extend their learning. Their learning opportunities should allow them to acquire the knowledge and technology skills that will allow them to contribute to and participate in a digital world." and "the general assembly therefore finds that it is in the best interests of the people of the state of Rhode Island to enact the Rhode Island statewide virtual education act." The stated purpose of RIGL 16-22.1 is to "provide access to high quality, rigorous, and relevant online learning opportunities for all of Rhode Island's public school students and to ensure promulgation of virtual learning regulations supporting access to high quality virtual instruction consistently throughout the state."

This policy is also intended to advance our district mission and to ensure that our local policies and practices align with the RI Board of Education Virtual Learning Regulations Quality Assurance which states: "Learners in Rhode Island are assured access to quality instruction and learning opportunities through these Virtual Learning Education Regulations as well as, the Rhode Island Basic Education Program, the Regents Secondary Regulations, Regulations of the Board of Regents Governing Career and Technical Education in Rhode Island, the Rhode Island Teaching Standards and the Education Evaluation Program. The Regents Regulations for Virtual Learning Education complement and enhance existing regulations by promoting students access to quality online learning opportunities as part of each student's pathway."

The Foster-Glocester School District is committed to providing a comprehensive educational system that develops the whole child (academic, career, and personal/social) through academics, personalized learning courses (electives), athletics, blended and online learning, and other extra-curricular experiences. In accordance with the authority, scope, and purpose of the RI Board of Education Virtual Learning Regulations, the Foster-Glocester Regional School Committee pursuant to its delegated statutory authority under the Rhode Island General Law also recognizes that "a variety of learning options, including online courses and programs,

are critical for 21st Century learners" and that "online learning provides opportunities for students to access curriculum and specialized courses in a flexible learning environment that might not otherwise be available."

Our Vision

Collaborative, relevant, and personalized learning experiences develop students' intellectual core, 21st Century Skills, work habits, and expand their content knowledge in technology-rich learning environments. Students purposefully choose college and career pathways that may lead to post-secondary credit and/or industry certification. Students use technology innovatively and collaboratively to produce relevant original work with precision and accuracy. Real world applications, aligned to student interests, are incorporated into integrated curricular experiences that thoughtfully use time, flexible groups, technology, physical and virtual resources to engage students and advance learning in classroom, independent, and other settings.

Blended and Online Learning System Design

The RI Board of Education Policy on Virtual Learning is framed around four regulatory principles:

- 1) All learners in Rhode Island will have access to high quality, rigorous, and relevant online learning opportunities;
- 2) Virtual learning education in Rhode Island will support all learners in meeting academic and career goals;
- 3) Rhode Island will support reliable access to the Internet and technology tools necessary for virtual learning; and
- 4) The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) will coordinate these Virtual Learning Education Regulations with policies developed by higher education institutions and other state agencies.

The responsibilities of the RI Department of Education include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Ensuring that existing and future state policies do not limit or prohibit students from engaging in online learning opportunities;
- 2) Ensuring open enrollment for all learners to provide greater access to quality online content;
- 3) Promoting flexible student funding that supports access to online learning opportunities; and
- 4) Supporting opportunities for statewide efficiencies to increase access to technology and online learning.

Foster-Glocester Regional School District Responsibilities and Functions

In accordance with the RI Legislature's Virtual Education Act and the district's responsibilities outlined in RI Board of Education Virtual Learning Regulations, FGRSD shall "support student access and engagement in a variety of online learning opportunities such as online courses or online programs suitable for meeting the unique learning needs of individual students." Students attending FGRSD shall continue to have access to online learning that supports and extends their learning experiences previously outlined in FGRSD Graduation by Proficiency Policies and local procedures related to virtual learning education. Additionally, school and district officials shall refine and/or establish policies, procedures, administrative directives and criteria to identify approved virtual learning opportunities that fulfill coursework graduation requirements. In accordance with the requirements of the RI Board of Education Virtual Learning Regulations, local policies "must not limit access or prohibit approved online coursework from fulfilling graduation requirements. Recognition of which virtual learning opportunities fulfill coursework graduation requirements is a local decision and shall be predicated on alignment to state adopted standards and other relevant national and industry standards."

FGRSD Blended and Virtual Learning Administrative Directives, Policies, and Procedures

School and district administrators are authorized to develop, implement, and revise, as needed, administrative directives, policies, and procedures, informed by information from the professional staff when appropriate, regarding the use, care, control, implementation, communication, and instructional support of all blended and virtual learning outlined in governing laws and regulations. FGRSD responsibilities and functions delineated in RIGL 16-22.1 - the Virtual Education Act delegated to school and district administrators include, but are not limited to:

- Criteria that ensures virtual courses and content aligned with standards and graduation requirements;

- Selection of quality providers of virtual courses and online content;
- Ensuring online teachers are appropriately trained and qualified;
- Ensuring local policies do not limit student access to quality online learning opportunities;
- Ensuring all students in the district have access to high quality, rigorous, and relevant virtual courses and other online learning activities;
- Procedures to verify the attendance and participation of students enrolled in virtual courses; and
- Accountability provisions that monitor students enrolled in virtual courses and other online learning activities.

FGRSD responsibilities and functions delineated in the Virtual Learning Regulations delegated to school and district administrators include, but are not limited to:

- Ensuring appropriate placement of students in online learning programs or courses;
- Communicating the criteria and procedures for enrolling and remaining enrolled in online learning opportunities;
- Communicating to students and parents or guardians acceptable online course work that will meet state and local graduation requirements;
- Providing some flexibility for student choice that allow students to demonstrate achievement in self-paced online coursework based on proficiency level rather than seat time;
- Use of appropriate technology and online learning opportunities to help student achieve their goals and prepare them for success in college and careers;
- Making changes to Individual Learning Plans that relate to student's virtual learning opportunities; and
- Other requirements for blended and virtual learning in Foster-Glocester Regional Schools as necessary to meet state laws, regulations, and the mission of the district.

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