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Chuck Palmer, Director of Educational Options & Innovations

Summer Update 2017

Dear Virtual Academy Families,

I hope each of you have had a relaxing summer with family and friends. In just a few weeks, the 2017-18 school year will be upon us. We are excited for the start of school and what promises to be an outstanding year!

Our teaching staff will look almost the same as last year with one exception: Ms. Jonutz obtained a full time position in another district and will no longer be with us. She will be greatly missed by all of us. We are very fortunate however, to have Mr. Ross Wold joining us to take over social science instruction. Mr. Wold comes to us having taught elsewhere in the district and brings with him a positive, friendly, and energetic teaching style that I think students will enjoy. Please join me in welcoming Mr. Wold to the Virtual Academy. For our leadership students, Mr. Madsen will now serve as ASB advisor.

We have also made some other changes to the program at the Virtual Academy that are designed to provide more flexibility for students and families as well as enhance student experiences on campus. Here is a brief synopsis of some of these changes:

- **We will now offer school on Fridays.** After hearing from several parents who expressed a desire for their student to attend campus all week, we have elected to offer a five day a week program.
- **Changes to mandatory attendance requirements:** In the past, students were required to physically attend campus twice per week. At times, some families indicated this was a hardship. In turn, we have created a new attendance policy that will allow students and families to have more control over their educational experience while still creating a system of accountability to help insure student success. Please see the enclosed "2017-18 Virtual Academy Attendance Policy" document for more details.
- **Addition of Advisory Periods:** On a monthly basis, students will meet with their grade level advisor to partake in activities designed to enhance both their educational and social experiences at school. During advisory, students will engage in activities in topics such as college and career planning, dealing with stress/anxiety, and time management. We will even

be introducing some practical life skills and fun activities such as teaching new drivers how to change a tire, how to interview for a job, and perhaps I may even give a lesson or two on fly fishing! The purpose of these advisory periods is to provide students with tangible information that they can apply to their futures while building deeper connections with school staff. Advisories will be offered monthly on each day of what will be deemed "Advisory Week" so as to connect with each student regardless of their mandatory attendance day. The listing of dates for advisory weeks, grade level advisory teacher assignments, and advisory week bell schedule is enclosed in this mailer. We may also have a day or two in which we invite parents to come share a particular talent or skill that they have that would be beneficial to the students. Stay tuned for more information!

Other Important Information:

- During the first two weeks of school, we request that all students, especially our new students, physically attend campus at least four days per week. Doing so helps your student and our teachers to get to know one another and insure a good start.
- Student pictures will be taken on the first day of school through Lifetouch Photography. Please see the enclosed form for more information.
- **Updating parent contact and other information in Aeries:** Please read through the enclosed information sheet on how to setup or update your information in the Aeries student information system. *All information must be updated prior to the start of school.* Thank you.

Important Dates

- **Summer Hours:** Office Hours Starting July 17th: 7:30-3:30 Monday through Friday
- **First Day of School:** Monday, August 7th. School starts at 7:55 and is dismissed at 2:35
- **Back to School Night:** Tuesday, August 15th - 6-8pm

I look very much forward to seeing you and our students soon! Enjoy the rest of your summer!

Sincerely,

Chuck Palmer, Director, El Dorado Virtual Academy

Enclosures

Master Agreement: *PLEASE READ - VERY IMPORTANT!*

In this mailer is your student's Master Agreement and schedule for next year. **In order for your student to start school, the Master Agreement MUST be returned prior to the first day of school.** Please complete all information on the form, sign and date. A return envelope has been provided for you so you may promptly return the signed Master Agreement no later than August 2nd. As a charter school, this document is required by the state and must be on file before a student begins classes. Thank you for returning this to us promptly!

Course Changes:

As students review the courses list on their schedule, they may have changed their mind as to which courses they would like to take. If that is the case, please complete a course change form, available on the school website or in the office, and submit it with your Master Agreement prior to the start of school. Please note that completion of a change form does not automatically mean that your schedule has been changed. Your request will be reviewed and if your change is made you will receive notification from the office.

A note on Concurrent Enrollments:

As of the date this letter was mailed, most counselors in the district have not returned from their summer vacation. In turn, most concurrent enrollment requests have not been reviewed as of yet. I do not expect to hear back on these requests until the very end of the month. As soon as we receive word if your student's concurrent enrollment was accepted or denied, we will let you know. Thank you for your patience in this process.

Other Useful Information for Parents

Transportation

To learn more about busing options for your student, please visit our district's transportation page at: <http://www.eduhsd.k12.ca.us/Transportation/index.html>

Cafeteria

To learn more about the food services program through our district, please visit:

<http://www.eduhsdnutrition.net/>.

The link to pre-pay for meals can be found here:

<http://www.eduhsdnutrition.net/index.php?sid=0604161523477603&page=prepaidacct>

2017-18 Virtual Academy Attendance Policy

In analyzing our student performance over the years, our data indicates that students who attend classes on a daily basis tend to perform better academically. At the same time, we realize that not all students can attend daily. The Virtual Academy takes pride in providing flexibility in our educational options while still offering ample support to our students. In that light, we have created the following attendance requirements to create more flexibility for our students and families while still creating a safety net of support for those who are struggling academically. The policy is as follows:

Direct Instruction on Campus + One Day Virtual Attendance Option (The 1+1 Program)*

- As in the past, students must attend campus for their direct instruction day for each class. The direct instruction day is highlighted in blue on the Fall/Spring course schedule (enclosed).
- Students are still required to attend class for a 2nd day, but this now may be done virtually. On a regular basis, teachers will live “broadcast” their lessons on non-mandatory attendance days and students can log in from home to watch/interact in the lesson in real time. This will be a very similar structure to what many colleges follow for their online courses. These lessons will also be recorded and posted in Canvas. We will provide students more information on how this works during the first day of school.

*In order for a student to be eligible for the 1 + 1 program noted above, the student must maintain A or B grades in **ALL** coursework (Including online courses). In the case of a student maintaining a grade less than an A or B, the following policy will apply**:*

- If the student has a grade of a C in **any** course (including online coursework), they are required to be physically on campus at least two days out of the week, which includes the mandatory direct instruction day. Once the grade(s) are remediated back to the A/B range, the student may go back to the 1+1 attendance program.
- If a student has a grade of a D or F in **any** course (including online coursework), they will be required to attend campus for at least four days out of the week so as to help them improve their academic standing. Once their grades improve, they can move to the two day attendance structure noted above.

**** It is highly recommended that students attend campus as regularly as possible. Parents are strongly encouraged, whenever possible, to have their student attend daily and then earn the opportunity (based on their grades) to attend fewer days per week. Even students who are maintaining A's and B's can strongly benefit both academically and socially from more frequent on site attendance.***

***** Please note that exceptions will not be granted to this already very flexible attendance policy. The mandatory requirements for attendance are based solely on helping your student achieve to the highest level possible and afford them the opportunity for increased teacher support.***

Thank you for partnering with us on creating opportunities for academic success for your student!

Updating Student Information in Aeries

Mandatory for Students to Attend First Day of School

Prior to the start of school, all student information must be confirmed or updated in the Aeries system. Parents may simply log into the Aeries system and verify all of their information. If none of your information has changed you can quickly review the information and then submit it. If you need to make changes you can edit forms online and then submit them without having to complete the entire form over again.

Just like in years past we need this information for your student to start school on Monday. Parents who do not have access to the internet at home, please feel free to stop by the school during summer business hours and we will be happy to assist you. Again, this process does need to be completed prior to the first day of school.

Instructions

Existing Accounts: *If You did this last year with us*

If you did this process at the Virtual Academy or any other school in our district last year then you already have an existing account. You will enter your email address and password and follow the step by step process to submit the documents.

If you forgot your password you can hit the forgot password button and a temporary password will be emailed to you. *If you do not receive it please check your spam folder.*

New Accounts: To create your account, please visit <http://parent.eduhsd.k12.ca.us> and click on "Create New Account." Follow the step-by-step process using the following information:

Student's Permanent ID:

Student's Home Telephone #:

Student's Verification Code:

