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Chuck Palmer, Director of Educational Options & Innovations

Summer Update 2018

Dear Virtual Academy Families,

I hope each of you have had a relaxing summer with family and friends. In just a few weeks, the 2018-19 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 very similar to last year, however we do have two new additions. We are pleased to announce that Mrs. Mary Ann Hunt, Educational Specialist, will be joining us for the 2018-19 school year. Mrs. Hunt will be coming to us from Ponderosa High School where she has served students and families for many years. In addition, we are pleased to announce the hiring of Mrs. Mikaela Nadolski, English teacher, for the 2018-19 school year. Mrs. Nadolski has resided in El Dorado County nearly all her life and graduated from El Dorado High School. After a few years of coaching swimming at the Division 1 collegiate level, Mrs. Nadolski has come home to her roots and her passion for teaching. We are excited to welcome her to the Virtual Academy family. We are also fortunate to have a new paraprofessional specialist who will be working in classrooms to assist our students, Ms. Kayla Warner. Kayla is a graduate of Union Mine (and a former student of mine). She is an incredibly talented and personable young woman who will be a great resource for our students. Please join me in welcoming our new staff to the Virtual Academy family!

The first year of our Early College Program with Folsom Lake College was a tremendous success! This year, FLC has agreed to continue to offer courses on our campus with Spanish 402 in the fall as well as Art 300 and College Success in the spring. We are still working out the final steps to an agreement that will eliminate the 16 year old age requirement to take FLC classes. This would mean that our 9th and 10th grade students who show strong academic ability would be able to take courses without having to seek out a waiver. Stay tuned...we hope to have this ironed out in the next month or two!

A Few Important Items:

As we start the school year, I wanted to remind students and families of a few important items related to attending at the Virtual Academy:

1. We are a closed campus - Virtual Academy students must have a parent check them in and out if they are arriving after the start of the school day or leaving early. This is an extremely important safety step that we ask for your cooperation with. It is important for us to know where our students are at all times. With that said, for students who drive themselves to school, you may

not leave campus early without checking out with the office and must have parent permission. Also, you may not drive off campus for lunch or at any other time after arriving at school.

2. The parking lot is off limits during the school day. If you must retrieve something from your vehicle, you must come to the office and get approval to do so. Going to your car during the school day is considered being out of bounds and school consequences will be issued.
3. Rattlesnakes - In case you didn't notice, it's been a tad bit hot! Snakes like the heat and have been seen on campus. Please avoid rocky areas or walking in grassy/brushy areas during this time of year.
4. Break/Lunch - As a reminder, food is available for students during break and lunch from the Union Mine Cafeteria. Students who choose to purchase food there are expected to get their food and then return to the Virtual Academy campus. You are not permitted to eat at or linger around the Union Mine campus.

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 16th: 7:30-3:30 Monday through Friday

- **New Student/New Family Orientation:** Wednesday, August 1st. 5:30-7:30 PM
- **First Day of School:** Monday, August 6th. School starts at 7:55 and is dismissed at 2:35
- **Health Preview Night:** Thursday, August 9th, 6:00-7:30 PM
- **Back to School Night:** Tuesday, August 14th - 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 3rd. 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 listed 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>

2018-19 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)*

- 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 required to attend class for a 2nd day, but this 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 is a very similar structure to what many colleges follow for their online courses.

*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!