

**Idaho Digital Learning
Parent & Student Handbook
2018-19**



Dear Parents,

Welcome to the exciting world of online learning! You and your student are participating in a unique, educational opportunity for students in Idaho. In cooperation with all Idaho school districts, Idaho Digital Learning has served over 185,000 course enrollments statewide! We are glad that you have chosen to be a part of it, and encourage you to take an active role in monitoring your student's progress in class.

First conceived in 2001 by Superintendents of school districts across the state, Idaho Digital Learning assists your local school by providing additional course offerings for students. Schools, parents and students use the wide variety of Idaho Digital Learning course offerings to work around local scheduling conflicts, to accelerate completion of school, to provide credit recovery options, take full advantage of the Advanced Placement and Dual Credit courses available through Idaho's state universities, and to help students gain college and career readiness skills.

Idaho Digital Learning is a state-sponsored, accredited, online virtual school. Our courses are taught by Idaho certified (and highly qualified) teachers, are built around Idaho's content standards and are an extension of your local school's curriculum.

We have provided the following information to assist you in understanding the options available for your student, our structure, suggested tips to assist with your student's success and resources to help you during this year.

Thank you for choosing Idaho Digital Learning and know we are committed to a successful and positive learning experience for every student in Idaho.

Sincerely,
Dr. Cheryl Charlton
Superintendent

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Mission Statement

Advance equity, opportunity, accessibility, flexibility, and quality in education through collaborative relationships, service-oriented leadership, and innovative solutions.

Introduction

Idaho Digital Learning was created by an act of the Legislature in 2002 (Idaho Code Title 33 Chapter 55). Idaho Digital Learning is a supplemental course provider to schools throughout the state of Idaho.

- Opportunities for students - Idaho Digital Learning was created to "provide choice, accessibility, flexibility, quality and equity in curricular offerings for students in this state." To that end, the program was created as "a school-choice learning environment, which joins the best technology with the best instructional practices."
- Idaho Digital Learning is Accredited - Accreditation is provided through the Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC), an accreditation division of AdvancED.
- Idaho Digital Learning is an Idaho Entity - According to our legislation, courses are developed based on state standards and best practices in online learning and are the property of the Idaho Digital Learning. Idaho Digital Learning utilizes Idaho certified and highly qualified teachers, Idaho certified administrators, and our courses are delivered and developed internally according to Idaho content standards.
- Credits transcribed by the local school - Idaho Digital Learning is a supplemental course provider and does not transcribe grades. Rather, grade reports are submitted to the local school where the course is added to the student's transcript according to local policy. Courses offered through Idaho Digital Learning are like having an additional 250+ asynchronous course options in your local building.

How courses are offered

The vast majority of Idaho Digital Learning classes are offered asynchronously, meaning that class content may be accessed at any time of the day/week, even if the teacher is not present, thus removing any constraints of time on delivery of content. Though the vast majority of our content is available in the asynchronous format, our courses also contain varying degrees of synchronous components in which the student can interact with their teacher live.

Local Schools may utilize this flexibility in a variety of ways:

- Offering Idaho Digital Learning courses within the local school day: In this format, schools will typically have students take the class in assigned classroom during an assigned class period. The local school provides a “monitoring” site coordinator to help students stay on task and navigate through the course requirements
- Offering Idaho Digital Learning courses as an “overload” course outside of the school day: In this format, students are taking a class in addition to their full course load taken at their local school. Students still have a registering site coordinator but, because this person may not see students each day, students will need to be more independent to be successful.

The Two Primary Course Formats Utilized by Idaho Digital Learning

Idaho Digital Learning offers two types of course delivery formats: Cohort and Flex. For a quick one page comparison of these two course styles, please see the Flex-Cohort Comparison document. (Found on [Site Coordinator Resources](#) page on the Idaho Digital Learning website.)

Cohort Courses

Idaho Digital Learning has utilized *Blackboard* as its Learning Management Systems (LMS) to offer classes in this format; however, during the course of the 2018-19 school year, IDLA will be transitioning to a new Learning Management System: Schoology. During this transition time, courses will be offered in both formats until all courses are updated into Schoology.

Cohort (Blackboard or Schoology) Course Orientation

Before a student may begin their first cohort class, they are required to complete a self-guided orientation. Students taking a cohort course for the first time must complete the Blackboard or Schoology Orientation. Orientation instructs students how to navigate the Learning Management System and typically takes 2-3 hours to complete. Students taking a cohort course must complete orientation by the first day of class. Students who do not complete orientation will not be enrolled in their course.

NOTE: For any student who has previously completed a Blackboard Orientation, if they enroll in a new Schoology course, they will be required to complete the orientation specific to Schoology.

Fees

Course fees for cohort classes are \$75 per semester course and are assessed for all students enrolled after the course drop deadline (typically the 3rd Friday of class for 16 week classes). Exceptions to this include Advanced Placement, Dual Credit and SBAC prep courses where the Idaho Digital Learning Instructional fees are waived. Dual Credit

Students are responsible for purchasing college credits through the college in which they are enrolled. Students taking overload courses may be eligible to have these fees paid by the state. Please visit with your counselor to see if your student is eligible for [Advanced Opportunities](#) funding.

Structure

Cohort courses follow a structured pace and require student to student interaction in the course. These classes have set start/end dates and follow a pace where students have due dates and progress through material as a class.

Note: Cohort courses are offered in various lengths throughout the year (ie: 10 week summer courses, 12 week trimester courses and 16 week semester courses) and contain the same content; therefore, pacing will be increased in the shorter classes.

Testing

Cohort courses typically have several non-proctored tests throughout the course in addition to a required proctored final exam. Cohort courses may also contain a required final project.

Successful Course Completion

Each IDLA course includes a heavily weighted proctored comprehensive final exam or a final project. Students must complete the final project or final test or they will receive a 10% for their final course grade.

Note about Dual Credit Courses: Colleges may have specific course completion requirements. Please refer to each individual course syllabus to see if there are college specific course completion requirements.

Course Extensions

If local school policy allows, Idaho Digital Learning will grant a student a course extension if the minimum extension criteria is met. Local policies differ on their acceptance of student extensions so please refer to your local school policy for clarification before proceeding.

- o If your student finds that the deadline for class will not provide enough time to complete, s/he can apply for a class extension, requesting an additional 14 days to complete. To qualify for an extension, a student must have a grade (excluding the final exam) of at least a 50% in class, and submit a plan for completing the course. Students are to request an extensions from within their

course, no later than 5:00 pm on the final day of class. Students are strongly encouraged to request an extension by the Friday before the Final Exam week to provide the local school's site coordinator time to approve, or suggest edits to extension requests.

- o Extenuating Circumstances - please contact your local site coordinator about the possibility of requesting an extension (for up to 35 days) due to events beyond the student's control.

Flex Courses

Flex courses are open enrollment courses that provide opportunity for students to “test out” of content they can demonstrate mastery in, and to (possibly) complete the course more quickly than a typical semester time frame. Because of this flexibility, the NCAA does not approve Flex courses for college sports eligibility. Students planning to compete at an NCAA school should utilize Idaho Digital Learning cohort courses only.

Flex Course Completion Requirements- Students enrolled in any Flex course must complete all tests, projects and Discussion Based Assessments with a score of 70% or higher.

Flex (Buzz) Course Orientation

Before your student begins their first Flex class, they are required to complete a self-guided orientation in the Buzz Learning Management System that typically takes less than 5 hours to complete. Students taking a flex course must complete it before they will be enrolled in their academic course.

Fees

Course fees for flex classes are \$75 per semester course for all students remaining in the course after the course drop deadline (14 days after the student is active in class).

Exceptions to this include SBAC prep courses where the fees are waived. Students taking overload courses may be eligible to have these fees paid by the state. Please visit with your counselor to see if your student is eligible for [Advanced Opportunities](#) funding.

Structure

Flex courses allow students to progress through classes at their own pace; however, students must complete a course pacing guide to help them plan out their course progression. Flex courses start as soon as a student is enrolled and/or completes orientation, and provide students up to 16 weeks to complete the class, depending upon their course enrollment date.

Note: Each student's course completion date is set based upon the student's enrollment date. For those who do not complete a flex course by the end of the extension period, please see your school's Site Coordinator for re-enrollment options.

* see the Idaho Digital Learning Academic Calendar for details
(Found on [Site Coordinator Resources](#) page on the Idaho Digital Learning website.)

Inactivity Drop Requests

If a student is inactive during the course for any 14 day period the instructor may send a request to the school to request that a student be dropped from that course. Inactivity will be determined by zero activity as displayed in the student activity log. Though students have great flexibility when taking flex courses, they are expected to work regularly.

Testing

Flex courses have proctored and unproctored tests, required Discussion Based Assessments (DBAs) and required projects that must be completed with a score of at least 70%. Students who do not initially earn a score of 70% or higher on a test, project, or DBA's will have opportunity to redo the assignment to earn a passing grade. Students who do not complete the requirements of the course will have a final grade of 10% reported to the school.

Course Extensions

If local school policy allows, Idaho Digital Learning will grant a student a course extension if the minimum extension criteria is met. Local policies differ on their acceptance of student extensions so please refer to your local school policy for clarification before proceeding.

- If your student finds that the deadline for class will not provide enough time to complete, s/he can apply for a class extension, requesting up to an additional 14 days to complete.
- To qualify, students must be, at least, 50% complete with their class and must request an extension, from within their course, **prior 5:00 pm on the final day of class.**
- Extenuating Circumstances - please contact your local site coordinator about the possibility of requesting an extension because of events beyond the student's control.
- **Re-enrollment** - if your student will not be able to complete the course by it's end date and/or extension deadline, flex students have the ability to re-enroll in the class. By doing so, the work completed up to that point will be transferred over

and the student will be continue with class from where they left off. Note: For students re-enrolling, a course fee will be billed to the local school. Please see your school's policy regarding Idaho Digital Learning fees.

Advanced Opportunities

Idaho Digital Learning works with local schools to update them about Advanced Opportunity course offerings available to students through Idaho Digital Learning. For additional information on participation requirements, please contact your Site Coordinator or visit the state's Advanced Opportunity website [HERE](#).

The \$75 Idaho Digital Learning course fee assessed to each school is waived for Dual Credit (DC) and Advanced Placement (AP) courses; however, additional fees will be incurred for registering for university credit (DC) or completion of the AP exam. Some Dual Credit courses may require the purchase of additional resources (ie: textbooks).

Dual Credit

Dual credit courses are courses in which a student may earn both a high school and a college/university credit. Students register for high school credit with their local school. Students must register for college/university credit with the college offering the credit. At the beginning of each course, the student will receive information from their Idaho Digital Learning teacher about how to register for college/university credit. It is very important that college/university registration deadlines are followed and academic requirements are understood, which may vary from Idaho Digital Learning requirements (ie: differing drop deadlines and course completion requirements)

General university information, as well as college/university contact information, will be provided in the syllabus and instructor information tab of each class. Before enrolling in any dual credit course, Idaho Digital Learning strongly recommends students consult with their school counselor to assist in proper course placement and assist in ensuring credit transferability to their future college of choice. One resource available to students and parents to help with this is the <http://coursetransfer.idaho.gov/> website.

Idaho Digital Learning teachers are adjunct faculty at the institution where credit is being offered. For registration questions, feel free to contact the Idaho Digital Learning teacher or the higher ed institute where credit is sought.

Note about **Satisfactory Academic Progress** (SAP) - It is extremely important for students to be aware that their progress in Dual Credit courses may be considered

when they apply for financial aid in college. In order for students to qualify for federal financial aid at the college or university of their choosing, they must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress in their courses and field of study. Because Dual Credit courses fall under college level coursework, their credit hours are subject to SAP. In other words, a student's academic progress in Dual Credit courses may have a future impact on his/her financial aid eligibility in post-secondary educational institutions.

There are several categories which fall under Satisfactory Academic Progress, but an excellent summary may be found at:

http://www.csi.edu/prospectiveStudents_/studentServices/financialAid/sap.asp

Dual Credit courses often require a textbook. Students are encouraged to purchase the textbook from a distributor or retailer of choice.

Important: Students wishing to withdraw from a Dual Credit course must withdraw from both the college, and Idaho Digital Learning. Idaho Digital Learning cannot withdraw a student from their college or university.

Advanced Placement: Resources will be provided in class to assist students in registering for their AP exam but please contact your local Site Coordinator and/or guidance counselor to help schedule this exam locally.

Advanced placement courses differ from dual credit courses in that students, at the completion of the class, will take a comprehensive [Advanced Placement \(AP\) exam](#) to determine eligibility for university credit.

Class Offerings

A complete list of Idaho Digital Learning's course offerings can be found within our [course catalog](#).

Materials provided in class

Idaho Digital Learning classes contain nearly all of the resources needed in class, include online textbooks/content and links to outside resources. The exceptions to these resources are noted within each class which may include, but are not limited to:

- Dual Credit classes (college level textbooks may be required)
- Lab science classes (lab work completed at home may require common household items)

For a list of required materials for each class, as well as a description of the course topics, please see the course syllabi within the Idaho Digital Learning Course Catalog.

Academic Honesty

If a student has cheated or plagiarized, the local school will be contacted to ascertain if the school has a cheating/plagiarism policy. If so, and at the school's discretion, the local school policy (or Idaho Digital Learning policy) will be followed.

Idaho Digital Learning has a zero-tolerance policy toward academic dishonesty

- I. Regular Course Assignments: A student taking an Idaho Digital Learning class is required to complete an Academic Honesty Contract and agree to the provisions outlined within. Students who do not comply with these provisions may receive one or more of the following consequences:
 1. A zero grade on the assignment, discussion, or assessment
 2. Notification to your local school of the incident
 3. Possible disciplinary action according to your local school's policies
 4. Other disciplinary action as seen fit by the Idaho Digital Learning instructor or online principal
 5. Removal from the course and/or a failing grade.

- II. Proctored Exams - If the local school and the Idaho Digital Learning teacher agree that a student has been caught cheating on a proctored exam, then a zero will be recorded for the final exam grade. A retake will not be allowed. Cheating on a final, including, but not limited to:
 - A. the use of digital resources (except where allowed),
 - B. help from other students,
 - C. study Aids
 - D. unauthorized notes, etc.

In cases where cheating is substantiated, this will result in a 0% being recorded on the exam.

Note: Failing a dual credit class may have implications on future use of Advance Opportunity funds and/or the use of Federal Educational Grants.

Note about Dual Credit Courses: Colleges may have specific academic honesty policies. These policies will be followed if an academic honesty violation occurs, which may vary from Idaho Digital Learning policy.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism is the act of presenting other people's ideas and writings, and not giving credit to these sources, by claiming them to be one's own. Plagiarism is academic dishonesty and may carry severe consequences, up to and including removal from class.

Plagiarism is:

1. Using ideas from another source without citing (giving credit to) that source
2. Using direct wording from another source (even a cited source) without quotation marks
3. Slightly rewording phrases from another source and passing the phrases as your own. (5 words in a row mean that it is plagiarized)
4. Passing another student's work as your own

Course Communications

Throughout the duration of a course, students, parents, and site coordinators will receive communications about student progress.

Welcome Communication

Within the first 2 weeks of the start of a course, parents can expect a welcome call home from your student's teacher, as well as an email containing course and contact information.

Progress Reports

Approximately every 2 weeks, a progress report is sent to the student, parent, and site coordinator. Each individual is strongly encouraged to monitor student progress in this manner, and to direct any questions or concerns to their student's teacher.

Texting

Teachers and Principals must always interact professionally with students and adults and as such, the following guidance is provided to establish best practices regarding texting and social media interactions with students.

Texting Permissions: Teachers and Principals may send and/or receive texts from students about class related items. Teachers are to let parents know that texting will be allowed, and also let them know that they may opt their student out of this communication option if they prefer.

Teacher and Principal Contact Information

As part of the welcome communication, parents will receive the contact information of the teacher and principal in their course. Additionally, contact information may be found within the student's course, and on [the Idaho Digital Learning website](#).

Course Withdrawals

- A course fee will not be assessed, nor will a final grade be reported to the local school if a student is withdrawn from a course prior to the drop/fee deadline.
- Students that are withdrawn from a course after the drop deadline, will have a "W" reported to the local school, and full course fees will be assessed.

Roles and Responsibilities

To assist all students in experiencing a positive online learning experience, guidelines have been provided below to outline roles and responsibilities of various individuals to assist your student in achieving their desired level of success. Below are a list of items these individuals should expect when completing an Idaho Digital Learning class.

Students

- Students must communicate often with their online teacher
 - This includes asking specific questions when confused, communicating with the teacher about goals and planned absences, and connecting with expert teachers via the eTutoring Center when needed.
 - Students should return communications from the teacher in a timely manner
- Students should log into their course and check their messages/email frequently (five days per week)
- Students must demonstrate time management and self-organization skills.
 - Students should plan on working 7-10 hrs per week in a 16wk course, and 10-15 hrs in a 12wk course.
 - **Suggestion:** Have students keep a notebook where they place important course information such as:
 - Course login information
 - Teacher, principal and local site coordinator contact information
 - Tech support contact information
 - Pacing guides (flex) or unit checklists (cohort) - these are extremely important for time management and daily goal tracking
 - Notes they have taken

- o Students should be aware that Idaho Digital Learning teachers may not be available “on demand” and understand teacher response time may take up to 24 hrs
- o Students should work closely with a local teacher/site coordinator, or parent to help hold them accountable and problem solve when questions arise
 - **Reminder:** students need to coordinate times with their local school site coordinator to take proctored tests in their course(s).
- Idaho Digital Learning Support Resources Available
 - o Technical support - computer issues (ie: broken links)
 - o Online tutoring - eTutoring and teacher office hours
 - o Online teacher - available for all class questions

Parents

- If taking a class from home, Idaho Digital Learning has provided a [Technology Readiness Checklist](#) to ensure your home computer’s operating system meets minimum requirements for class access.
- Monitoring Your Student’s Progress
 - o Grade reports will be sent to the parent’s email address provided at registration approximately every two weeks (more frequently in summer courses). Please use these reports to visit with your child about class progress.
 - o For greater detail, parents are encouraged to ask students to show you their class grades.
 - o Any time you have a question about your student’s progress, or class content, please feel free to contact your student’s Idaho Digital Learning teacher and/or Idaho Digital Learning principal. Contact information can be found within the *Instructor* link of your student’s class.
 - o For any parental concerns regarding student data, please see the *Idaho Digital Learning Student Data Privacy Policy* on Idaho Digital Learning’s [Students & Parents Resources webpage](#).
- Final Grade Dispute Procedure
 - o If a disagreement or misunderstanding arises between an Idaho Digital Learning teacher and a student, parent, or local school about a student’s final course grade, the party involved should first communicate with each other to attempt to resolve differences. If a resolution is not reached, the final grade may be appealed at the request of the school of record transcribing the credit. Appeals are to be requested within 90 days of the posting of the final grade by the Idaho Digital Learning teacher.

Idaho Digital Learning Teacher

Every Idaho Digital Learning class is taught by a highly qualified, Idaho certified teacher who is available to provide help to your student during their course. Every teacher will be available, weekly, for “office hours” to help answer questions your student may have and are required to respond to email/phone inquiries within 24 hours. In addition to individual office hours, Idaho Digital Learning provides each student access to our eTutoring Center for tutoring help. This is an area where various content area teachers are available to help all Idaho Digital Learning students with class questions at various times throughout the week. Information on when teachers/tutors are available can be found within every course.

For additional information, please refer to “[What to Expect from an Idaho Digital Learning Teacher](#)” document.

Idaho Digital Learning Principal

An Idaho certified principal is assigned to each class. Principals are not only available to assist teachers but can provide another resource for students and parents. If you ever have a question about class which has not been resolved between you and the teacher, please contact the class principal. Contact information for this individual may be found in the, “Instructor Information” tab located inside each course.

Site Coordinator

There are two primary roles that a Site Coordinators may play. Sometimes these roles are completed by one individual (often the school counselor), but sometimes these responsibilities are shared between several individuals:

- Registering Site Coordinator - the person at the local school who registers students for class, withdraws student from class, communicates general class expectations to students and approves student requests for extensions.
- Monitoring Site Coordinator - the person at the local school who works most closely with the student monitoring their progress, encouraging students, helping them problem solve instructional or technical issues and coordinates final exam schedules.

If you have questions about local policies (payment, extension, monitoring practices), please visit with your local school site coordinator.

A Note About Courses Taken During the Summer

In cases where Site Coordinators are unavailable for assistance during summer courses (ie: scheduling proctored exams or dropping a course), parents should direct questions to their local school. If unresponsive, please contact the Idaho Digital Learning office for help.

Idaho Digital Learning Tech Support

Idaho Digital Learning has excellent technical support personnel available to help students with technical problems in their class. If technical problems arise during class, your student should contact his/her teacher for assistance but, for immediate help, please contact our Tech Department at 208-342-0207 or toll free 1-800-927-8158, by email at: [support@Idaho Digital Learning.k12.id.us](mailto:support@IdahoDigitalLearning.k12.id.us), or through instant messaging on [Idaho Digital Learning's homepage](#) (see the "Contact Us" box located on lower right of screen).

Regional Coordinator

Every school in the state is assigned an Idaho Digital Learning Regional Coordinator. This individual works collaboratively with your school to update them on items such as new course offerings, best practices in online learning, scheduling conflicts and problem solving. This individual is available to assist you with any question you may feel needs additional attention and are happy to work with you on any question.

To contact your Regional Coordinator, please go to our [Website](#) and view the, "[Contact Your Regional Coordinator](#)" icon. If you are unsure of which Regional Coordinator works with your school, you may ask your Site Coordinator or call our office, at 208-342-0207.

Accessibility

Idaho Digital Learning is committed to providing digital resources that are accessible to all users, including users with disabilities.

We are actively working to increase the accessibility and usability of our digital resources and in doing so align resources to comply with level [Double-A of the World Wide Web Consortium \(W3C\)](#)

We are also committed to improving the accessibility of our course content. Within each course, tools and resources are provided to support learning for all students. Within the Student Resources area of each course, students can find the following support resource:

<https://slor.s3.amazonaws.com/unlicensed/Other/TemplateMasters/Accessibility/index.html>

If you have any questions or concerns about accessibility with Idaho Digital Learning resources, please contact Jacob Smith, Director of Operations at [jacob.smith@Idaho Digital Learning.k12.id.us](mailto:jacob.smith@IdahoDigitalLearning.k12.id.us) or 208-342-0207. We welcome any feedback that will help us improve the accessibility of our course content, systems, and websites.

Main Idaho Digital Learning Office

If you are not sure who to call with questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us at our main office at (208)342-0207.