This handbook is to be used as a guide for the parents and students attending OTA Online
OTA ONLINE OVERVIEW

Who We Are

OTA Online (OTA) is a public charter school authorized by the State of Oregon and the Oregon Trail School District to provide instruction to youth throughout the state through an innovative combination of online curriculum and supplemental instructional opportunities available at our Boring, Oregon campus. Field trips and social activities are also integral to the program.

OTA Online Mission

Our mission at Oregon Trail Academy Online is to create reflective, critical thinking young people who see themselves as strong contributors to the world they live in. We believe a rigorous education enables students see the connection between the subjects they learn and the world around them.

OTA Online Principles

We understand that the teacher-student relationship is critical to humanizing the teaching and learning experience.
We provide challenging, stimulating, and relevant learning experiences.
We believe that all students can be successful.
We work to ensure the learning is personalized.
We support students to work at their own pace.

OTA Online Values

Inquirers develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning, and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

Knowledgeable learners explore concepts, ideas, and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

Thinkers exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

Principled learners act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice, and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups, and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.
Open-Minded learners understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values, and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view and are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring learners show empathy, compassion, and respect toward the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and they act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

Risk-Takers approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas, and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

Balanced learners understand the importance of intellectual, physical, and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

Reflective learners give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

EXPECTATIONS

As a member of the OTA Online community, you are expected to commit yourself fully to your own personal growth and learning. To be successful in this program requires the hard work and dedication of the student and the student’s parents and/or guardians. The parents/guardians must take an active role in the student’s school experience.

Student expectations:

- Be motivated and capable of working independently
- Commit to working approximately 5 to 6 hours per day on their assigned curriculum
- Submit only their own work
- Communicate with their teachers regularly via phone, online system, email, or other means
- Observe school policies and rules

Parent/guardian expectations:

- Monitor daily schoolwork and proper computer usage
- Help the student to track his/her progress
- Encourage the use of a quiet study environment
- Arrange for a high-speed internet connection—at their own expense
- Be available to actively participate in advisor meetings held every semester
- Communicate promptly with staff should questions or concerns arise
Staff expectations:

Students are assigned a faculty member who meets with them approximately once every semester. These meetings will often involve checking progress, providing academic guidance, tutoring, communicating program information, and answering questions. Faculty is also expected to be available during business hours by email and school phone. Staff will respond to inquiries typically within 24 hours during the school week.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How much do we have to pay for this program?

As a public charter school our core educational program is free. The family is responsible for the cost of the internet set-up, as well as your monthly internet bill. If a family chooses to participate in field trips or other extra-curricular activities, they are responsible for any costs associated with those activities.

2. Can we leave this program at any time?

Yes, just like a public school, you have the right to leave this program. Students who leave the program and then wish to re-enroll, will need to reapply through the regular application process.

3. What about the state testing?

We use Oregon Statewide Assessments. For more information about the state testing please go to www.ode.state.or.us. You will be able to locate dates, regulations, frequently asked questions, etc.

4. What will happen during the regular student-advisor scheduled meetings?

The regular scheduled meetings are set up to help the student, tutor, check progress, provide academic guidance, communicate program information and answer any questions.

5. Can we choose or switch curriculum and level?

Yes. If a level is too easy or too challenging, we can accommodate a change, pending the approval of the counselor and/or an administrator. If there is an assignment on a particular subject you do not want your child to learn, we can make some modifications to the curriculum.

6. School Calendar: (What days do I go to school?)

OTA follows the Oregon Trail School District school calendar. A copy of this calendar can be found on the school district web site: http://oregontrailschools.com
7. Who should attend OTA Online?

OTA is for students and parents who would prefer an online, web based curriculum. OTA is for students who fit into one or more of the following categories:

- Prefer to be educated at home
- Are self-motivated learners
- Enjoy one on one communication with advisors
- Have circumstances which prevent them from effectively attending a traditional public school

8. Can I participate in Athletics or other Extra Curricular Activities?

Yes, you are allowed to participate in your resident school district’s athletics and extra-curricular activities that occur before or after school hours. Contact your local school district for more information.

9. Can my child take classes at another public middle or high school while taking classes with OTA?

Yes, students outside of Oregon Trail School District may enroll less than full time.

10. How are Grades Determined?

OTA students receive a letter grade for each completed class. Grades are converted to a 4-point scale to determine grade point average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A (90-100%)</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B (80-89%)</td>
<td>Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C (70-79%)</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D (60-69%)</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F (0-59%)</td>
<td>Fail, no credit earned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Incomplete, no credit earned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>No pass, no credit earned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Pass, credit earned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. What Can Parents Do to Help?

As with all education, and especially this program, OTA is built upon parental support. In order for your child to be successful, you, the parent, must play an intricate part of his/her education.

- Provide a quiet study environment at home. Ask your child if there is something you can do to help (provide tutoring, dictionaries, other references).
- Help your child assess personal strengths and weaknesses and encourage him/her not to avoid the subjects he/she finds to be most challenging.
- Recognize your child’s qualities and reward good behaviors.
- Monitor homework and schoolwork and proper computer usage. (daily reading,
journaling, computer progress)

- Be involved with the school - make sure to meet and get to know your child's teachers. This may encourage your child to be more open with you in sharing school experiences.
- Establish a work schedule and maintain consistency with the schedule, in addition to setting daily work schedules and work completion goals.
- Set the website as your homepage and regularly check the calendar for upcoming events. Do your best to provide a breakfast for your child, and as often as possible, try to have a sit-down dinner.
- Turn off the television and have quality conversations with your son or daughter.
- Read and write with your child.

12. What about Possible Snow Days?

OTA will follow the Oregon Trail School District calendar and will follow the same calendar for its students. Parents and students are advised to listen to the local TV and radio stations to determine the status of the Oregon Trail School District in the event of school closure (e.g., snow days). Your advisor will not be available during days in which the Oregon Trail School District is closed, including snow days. If your local district is closed, while Oregon Trail School District is open, your advisor may opt to reschedule any appointments, for safety’s sake, you may have set for the day. You should also check Parent Square and the OTA website.

13. What are the Graduation Requirements and Required Courses?

**Graduation requirements:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area Name</th>
<th>Credits Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health Education</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Learning</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts, Applied Arts, and Second Language</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career/Personalized Learning</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies/History</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/Electives</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to this coursework, students must demonstrate proficiency in certain areas, according to district requirements. Please contact your teacher or counselor for additional information.
14. What electives does OTA offer our students?

OTA will offer many different electives. Your counselor will describe them to you during the initial registration and scheduling process. You can also refer to our Course Directory and/or the website for more information.

15. What other activities will OTA offer?

We are offering a series of elective and enrichment opportunities as well as field trips. Please check the website for a listing of opportunities, dates and times, and course descriptions.

MANDATORY PARTICIPATION IN MATH AND ENGLISH CLASS

Students in grades 6-12 will be required to participate once per week in our on-site Math and English classes if they are new to our program or are currently below the grade level proficiency standards that have been determined by the State of Oregon in Mathematics and English Language Arts. These classes are offered daily and will last for one hour.

SCHOOL POLICIES AND STUDENT RULES OF CONDUCT

The OTA community rules include all those listed in this handbook, any changes posted in the school or distributed to students and their parents, and any other rules clearly communicated to students by OTA staff members.

INTERNET COMMUNICATION WITH ADVISOR POLICY

Toward the goal of educating OTA students in good written communication skills, advisors will insist that emails and other internet communications will be done using good grammar and spelling. It is expected that a student will use complete sentences and abstain from any form of vulgarity, typical instant messaging abbreviations, or inappropriate subjects.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

OTA requires daily work within the Oregon Trail School District calendar. Please communicate with the advisors your plans to schedule vacations, etc. Ten consecutive school days without work, or communication, is grounds for dismissal from the program. Please communicate to your advisor if you are unable to commit to the above.

TIME EACH WEEK DOING COURSEWORK

Students should dedicate a minimum of 20-25 hours per week to maintain adequate progress.

FAMILY TRIPS AND VACATIONS

OTA requests that families schedule vacations or special programs so as not to conflict with school. In the case of a planned absence, the student must consult with his/her advisor ahead of time. OTA will grant permission for absences if they are pre-approved by the advisor, the student is in good academic standing, and the student will complete make up work.
PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING

OTA students are expected to do their own work and cite the work of others as appropriate. Plagiarism is the willful presentation of someone else's previously written, published, or copyrighted material as one's own. Such material may include work that appears in print, online, or in audio or video formats. Copying work from another student may be regarded as plagiarism if done without consent and if credit is not given to the original writer. Penalties for cheating and/or plagiarism may include failing the assignment in question, failing the course or project, failing the semester, or being subject to a disciplinary hearing. OTA may choose, at its discretion, to employ plagiarism-detecting software.

HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION

OTA will maintain its commitment to students who need more time than usual to achieve critical competencies. In such instances it is important that the student continues to make a reasonable effort to succeed. A student who consistently fails to demonstrate commitment to earning the necessary credits will eventually be subject to dismissal.

OVERVIEW OF DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES

The purpose of disciplinary action at OTA is to ensure that both individual students and the OTA community stay focused on growth and learning. Depending on the nature of the infraction and the student’s past performance, any or all of the following consequences may be appropriate:

**Student warning, oral or written**
Immediate resolution of the problem or issue is expected.

**Parent notification**
Prompt resolution of the problem or issue is expected. Parent phone calls or conferences may result in the student signing a written commitment to improve his/her behavior and/or performance.

**Academic consequences**
Infractions that are primarily academic in nature, such as non-participation in school work, may result in students receiving a lower grade and/or a student contract designed to help the student improve.

**Contracts**
Very often, as a matter of course, a student contract will be written to agree on the correct course of action and determine goals for improvement. This is especially true in disciplinary circumstances in which suspension or expulsion is trying to be avoided.

**Dismissal**
After a proper investigation and hearing, a student may be dismissed from OTA. Poor daily participation or lack of significant effort may eventually lead to dismissal but only after clear warnings.

These consequences will be handled on an individual basis.
STUDENT SAFETY ONLINE

As an online school, we appreciate our responsibility to protect our students from the threats inherent to the internet. Families are strongly encouraged to review student safety information and resources that are available in the Resources area of the OTA website. The material is intended to help students and families understand the risks inherent in the online world, and what they can do to reduce those threats.

CARING FOR YOUR COMPUTER HARDWARE

- Screens are fragile. Close the lid gently when not in use.
- Avoid touching the screen. Use only dry facial tissues to clean the screen. If necessary, dampen with a little water.
- Plug and unplug cables gently. The connectors have been known to break.
- Do not tightly wrap AC cords. Severely bending the cable where it attaches to the “brick” can damage the cord and make the AC adaptor inoperative.
- Use the computer on a hard flat surface when possible. If the fan opening on the bottom of the computer is blocked, the laptop can overheat.
- Touch pads operate best when hands are clean and dry. Avoid eating or drinking while operating the computer.

CARING FOR YOUR COMPUTER CONTENT

To safeguard your schoolwork, photos, and other content, perform regular backups. Downloading your data to a thumb drive data storage device or using cloud services is an excellent way to safeguard your files.

Lessons and tests are stored on the Edgenuity so backup of these files is not necessary.

Families may wish to block certain content from the student’s computer. There is commercially available software that will limit what web sites can be visited and when the computer can access the internet. Disney Circle is an excellent solution. Open DNS is also an excellent free software alternative.