



1 Instructor Handbook

Mission Statement

The Shenandoah Community School District, in partnership with families and the community, will provide each student an educational environment that maximizes his or her potential to become responsible, successful citizens and lifelong learners in an ever-changing world.

Vision Statement

It is the vision of the Shenandoah Schools, in partnership with the community that we provide:

- Students have the tools to become responsible, successful citizens and lifelong learners in an ever-changing world.
- A safe and caring environment that ensures the dignity of all.
- Opportunities that stretch student and staff capabilities.
- School staff that are focused and visionary, collaborative, and empowered to make knowledgeable decisions.

Equity Statement

It is the policy of the district not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact the District's Equity Coordinator, Aaron Burdorf, Equity Coordinator. Shenandoah CSD, 304 W. Nishna Rd., Shenandoah, IA 51601. Phone 712-246-1581 Email burdorfa@shencsd.com.

Program Description

The IGNITE program will develop a learning environment that creates the context where students will be engaged in a continuum of service, which could include one or more of the following:

- online learning,
- blending learning,
- project-based learning,
- work-based learning, internships, and/or apprenticeships.

IGNITE will provide services to students who attend Shenandoah CSD on campus or remotely, who are dual enrolled homeschool students, or are open enrolled. The program's structure will allow students to maximize their learning potential using a personalized education plan that includes access to core instruction through traditional or online learning, career technical education programs, or other specialized teaching and learning.

Students are expected to adhere to the Shenandoah CSD student handbook, code of conduct, all board policies and procedures, and applicable building-level student handbooks.

IGNITE may not be appropriate for all families. Enrollment in IGNITE is a team decision consisting of student, parent/guardian, and IGNITE administration. An In-Take and Exit meeting will be held for each applicant. All students and parents are required to submit the IGNITE agreements. The agreements outline the expectations necessary for a successful IGNITE learning experience.

IGNITE is a full-year program. Students are expected to participate for the entire school year. Students may be removed from the IGNITE program under unique circumstances with the consent of the program administrator.

Activities

Students will be encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities, clubs, and school-sponsored activities as long as they meet the eligibility requirements required of all students. Resident students may participate in an unlimited number of Shenandoah Activities. Students who are open enrolled into the IGNITE program may participate in two resident district activities in their resident district. Additional activities are allowed at the discretion of the resident district. Students wanting to participate in home district activities need to contact IGNITE Administration. The IGNITE Administration will contact the K-12 Activities Director to participate in SHS district activities.

Communication Procedures

Communication about the IGNITE program will be shared via email through ParentSquare and posted on the Shenandoah CSD Website www.shencsd.com. IGNITE Administration will communicate to families via email and with students via a school provided email address and Zoom/GoogleMeet.

Parents/guardians and students are encouraged to communicate with their assigned IGNITE Administration or Student Support Person via email or phone as the first line of contact with a question or concern about the program.

Students' first point of contact is their classroom instructor; Second point of contact is the student's student support person; Third point would be the IGNITE administrator.

When school is in full session, you can anticipate a response to your question or concern within 24 hours. It will take longer for staff to respond on days when school is not in session, on weekends, or on a noted holiday. You can reasonably expect a response the next day school is in session.

Instructors, student supports, or IGNITE Administration will connect with families at least once per week through announcements or updates. Additional scheduled office hours will be available for feedback and assistance.

Parents/guardians will have access to PowerSchool for grade information. Grades will be updated weekly.

Students who desire to take District courses onsite in addition to the Edgenuity courses may do so with the consent of the IGNITE Administration.

Grading/Assessment

Student's assignments, assessments, and grades will be reported using PowerSchool. The District's standard grading and reporting protocols will be used to assign final grades. General feedback on assignments may come in the form of email, face-to-face, or virtual conferencing. IGNITE will use the grade scale attached.

Grade-Level Advancement

Students must meet all established requirements to advance to the next grade level or graduate with a Shenandoah CSD diploma.

High School Grade Point Average (GPA)

All semester grades will be used to calculate students' GPA. Transcripts will be issued in the same manner as all other

students participating in the face-to-face school option.

Class rank will be calculated for each grade level.

Proctoring of Assessments

Some testing may only be available in the school building with the student's teacher. It is the family's responsibility to ensure that students are transported to and from the testing site according to the testing schedule.

Requirements for State Testing

All students will be required to participate in all assessments required by the State of Iowa. Assessments may be in person or virtually depending on the guidelines set by the state of Iowa or district.

State Required Intervention and Progress Monitoring

Students in grades K through 5 that are identified for intervention and progress monitoring through the FAST screening or iReady process are required by the state to participate in interventions and progress monitoring. These required times will be scheduled by the IGNITE Administration or K-5 instructor.

Students in grades 6-12 will take the iReady assessments fall, winter and spring. These assessments can be taken at home or in person.

Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP) Testing

ISASP testing is the federal accountability test under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and must be completed by all students in grades 3 to 11 in a face-to-face or virtual environment proctored by an Iowa licensed teacher.

IGNITE Administration will provide information about testing prior to the testing window during the spring semester.

Other Testing

All other mandated testing is required on an individual basis. If your student is required to participate, information will be provided from the IGNITE Administration.

Aligned to Iowa Teaching Standards & Online Learning Best Practice

Iowa Teaching Standards Overview

The Iowa Teaching Standards establish expectations for effective teaching practices that improve student learning, engagement, and achievement. In online and blended learning environments such as CANVAS, these standards help guide teachers in designing organized, accessible, engaging, and student-centered courses.

The standards emphasized in this checklist include:

- **Standard 1:** Enhances academic performance and supports implementation of the school district's student achievement goals.
- **Standard 2:** Demonstrates competence in content knowledge appropriate to the teaching position.
- **Standard 3:** Demonstrates competence in planning and preparing for instruction.
- **Standard 4:** Uses strategies to deliver instruction that meets the multiple learning needs of students.
- **Standard 5:** Uses a variety of methods to monitor student learning.
- **Standard 6:** Demonstrates competence in classroom management.
- **Standard 7:** Engages in professional growth.
- **Standard 8:** Fulfills professional responsibilities established by the school district.

Effective CANVAS courses should support all eight standards through intentional instructional design, communication, assessment, accessibility, and ongoing reflection.

Course Organization & Navigation

Iowa Teaching Standards 1, 3, 4

Connection to Iowa Standards

Strong course organization supports student achievement by reducing confusion and increasing instructional clarity. Iowa Teaching Standard 3 emphasizes thoughtful planning and preparation, while Standard 4 focuses on meeting diverse learner needs. A well -organized CANVAS course allows students to independently navigate content, locate assignments, and manage their learning responsibilities.

Clear structure is especially important in online and blended environments because students rely heavily on digital organization to stay engaged and academically successful.

Checklist

Course Home Page

- Course homepage includes teacher name and contact information
- Homepage includes course description and purpose
- Homepage has a clear "Start Here" section
- Homepage includes syllabus and grading policies
- Students can access all major course components within 1 –2 clicks
- Homepage includes announcements or weekly overview

Module Structure

- Modules are organized by week, unit, or topic consistently
- Each module includes:
 - Learning objectives

- Instructions
- Assignments
- Assessments
- Resources
- Studio Component to each module
- Module naming conventions are consistent
- Older modules remain accessible for review
- Due dates are clearly posted in Canvas Calendar

Navigation

- Unused navigation tabs are hidden
- Students know where to submit assignments
- Students can easily locate grades and feedback
- External links work correctly
- Mobile -friendly design considerations are used

2. Instructional Design & Learning Objectives

Iowa Teaching Standards 1, 2, 3

Connection to Iowa Standards

Iowa Teaching Standards emphasize rigorous content knowledge, instructional alignment, and purposeful lesson planning. Effective online instruction begins with clearly identified learning targets aligned to Iowa Academic Standards and course outcomes.

Teachers should design CANVAS courses that include meaningful learning experiences, clear directions, and multiple opportunities for students to engage with content in different ways. Instructional materials should support both academic rigor and student accessibility.

Checklist

- Learning targets are posted for each unit/module
- Learning objectives align with Iowa Academic Standards
- Assignments align to course objectives
- Lessons include multiple instructional methods:
 - Video
 - Reading
 - Discussion
 - Interactive activities
- Content is chunked into manageable sections
- Directions are written clearly for students
- Examples/models are provided for major assignments
- Rubrics are attached to assignments
- Real-world or career -connected applications are included
- Opportunities for student choice are provided

3. Student Engagement & Interaction

Iowa Teaching Standards 3, 4, 5

Connection to Iowa Standards

Student engagement is essential in online learning environments. Iowa Teaching Standards stress the importance of instructional strategies that meet diverse learning needs while actively involving students in the learning process.

In CANVAS courses, engagement includes teacher presence, student collaboration, interactive learning activities, and consistent communication. Students are more likely to remain motivated and successful when they feel connected to both the instructor and their classmates.

Checklist

- Weekly teacher communication is provided
- Announcements are posted regularly
- Students receive timely responses to questions
- Discussion boards encourage meaningful interaction
- Collaborative learning opportunities are included
- Students participate in active learning tasks
- Feedback is personalized when possible
- Video messages or instructor presence elements are used
- Students have opportunities for reflection
- Engagement activities support different learning styles

4. Assessment & Feedback

Iowa Teaching Standards 1, 2, 4, 5

Connection to Iowa Standards

Iowa Teaching Standard 5 emphasizes monitoring student learning through multiple assessment methods. Effective CANVAS courses use both formative and summative assessments to measure student progress and guide instruction.

Feedback should be timely, specific, and actionable so students understand how to improve. Assessment systems within CANVAS should also provide transparency for grades, expectations, and academic progress.

Checklist

- Assessments measure stated learning objectives
- Formative assessments are included regularly
- Multiple forms of assessment are used:
 - Quizzes
 - Projects
 - Discussions

- Written responses
- Presentations
- Assignment expectations are clear
- Feedback is provided within a reasonable time frame
- Canvas gradebook is updated consistently
- Missing assignments are clearly marked
- Opportunities for revision or reteaching exist
- Academic integrity expectations are communicated

5. Accessibility & Equity

Iowa Teaching Standards 3, 4

Connection to Iowa Standards

Iowa Teaching Standards recognize that students have diverse learning needs, backgrounds, and abilities. CANVAS courses should be accessible and equitable for all students regardless of learning differences, technology access, or accommodations.

Accessible course design improves learning for every student by providing multiple ways to access content and demonstrate understanding. Equity -focused instruction also helps reduce barriers that may prevent students from fully participating in online learning.

Checklist

- Videos include captions
- Images include alt text when appropriate
- Fonts and colors are readable
- Documents are accessible to screen readers
- Course materials are available in multiple formats
- Students can access materials outside school hours
- Instructions are easy to understand
- Accommodations/modifications are provided when needed
- Technology requirements are clearly communicated
- Links and files open correctly on student devices

6. Communication & Classroom Management

Iowa Teaching Standards 5, 6

Connection to Iowa Standards

Online classroom management includes creating predictable routines, establishing communication expectations, and fostering respectful digital interactions. Iowa Teaching Standard 6 emphasizes creating a safe and productive learning environment that supports student success.

Teachers should clearly communicate procedures, deadlines, expectations, and support systems within CANVAS so students can remain organized and accountable.

Checklist

- Communication expectations are clearly stated
- Netiquette/digital citizenship expectations are posted
- Response time expectations are communicated
- Students know how to ask for help
- Parents/guardians can access important course information
- Late work policies are posted
- Technology troubleshooting resources are available
- Teacher maintains consistent routines
- Students receive reminders for upcoming deadlines
- Course promotes a positive digital learning environment

7. Continuous Improvement & Professional Practice

Iowa Teaching Standards 7, 8

Connection to Iowa Standards

Iowa Teaching Standards encourage educators to engage in reflection, professional learning, and collaboration to improve instructional effectiveness. Online teaching requires ongoing course revision based on student data, feedback, and emerging best practices.

Effective CANVAS instructors continuously evaluate their course design and instructional strategies to improve student outcomes and engagement.

Checklist

- Teacher reviews course analytics/data
- Student feedback is collected periodically
- Course content is updated regularly
- Broken links and outdated materials are removed
- Teacher participates in Canvas/online learning professional development
- Teacher reflects on course effectiveness
- Course revisions are based on student performance data
- Collaboration with colleagues occurs for course improvement

Professional Development Calendar 2026-2027

The purpose of professional development is to give structure, time, and guidance for IGNITE instructors. Best practices will be encouraged and instructed based on the following criteria.

Annual Professional Development:

The following guidelines will be given for professional development annually to instructors and staff.

- 40 hours at the beginning of each school year which include but are not limited to:
 - District Employee Training required for example (Right to know, Mandatory Reporting, etc.)
 - Syllabus Development and Review
 - Individual Growth Plans per each instructor focusing on a Iowa Standard
 - Review and editing of previous courses and improving delivery practices of content
- Monthly IGNITE Staff Meetings: (If you can not attend the meeting on zoom or in person. Time will be made up by the instructor through administration.)
- Summer professional development will be based on the needs of the school district.
- All new employees will complete the on-boarding process with IGNITE administration and Shenandoah staff. All new employees will need to complete the required training and administrative tasks necessary for employment by the 2 first pay period.

Required Faculty and Instructional Event Attendance

- Graduation Ceremony (Winter/Spring) faculty and staff will attend either in person or virtual
- Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held once a semester. Instructors will be asked to be available from 8-8PM on designated days for virtual meetings.
- All faculty will help with the administration of state standardized testing

Communication Requirements

- Instructors will post weekly announcements for each of the courses.
- Instructors will update the Data Dashboard weekly to communicate with administration, online support specialists, and support staff
- Communication will need to be tracked and recorded for best practices
- Parent-Square will be used for text messages to and from IGNITE staff and students

Grading for Instructors and Administrators

- Instructors will post grades bi-weekly in PowerSchool
- Instructors will need to send a follow up email to all students who are on data dashboards.
- Online Support Specialists will complete follow-up communications with students.
- Course completion and final grades will need to be completed 1 week post term dates.

High-quality CANVAS courses should:

- Promote clear organization and consistency
- Align learning activities to standards and objectives
- Include engaging and interactive instructional strategies
- Provide timely assessment and feedback
- Support accessibility and equity for all learners
- Maintain strong teacher presence and communication
- Encourage student independence and responsibility
- Reflect ongoing instructional improvement practices

These practices support both Iowa Teaching Standards and effective online learning environments for high school students.

Expectations and Guidelines for Instructors:

1. CANVAS course development will be limited to 60 hours per course per semester for each instructor during initial development. Courses should have the following:
 - a. Syllabus
 - b. 40 hours of coursework for students
 - c. Class Office Hours
 - d. Course Evaluation
 - e. Instructor Contact Information
2. Curriculum to be purchased or linked to CANVAS needs to be submitted for curriculum review by June 1st of the prior school year or one semester prior to course enrollments.
3. Curriculum will be on a 3 year review cycle from the IGNITE administration staff for funding or updating based on state requirements, technology updates, or course technology support needs.
4. At the conclusion of each course, a student and instructor evaluation will be completed. The evaluation will be standardized and created by the leadership team and distributed to course instructors to distribute and collect feedback from students.
5. Continuous improvement and development will be given to instructors to equal an additional 5 hours per semester per course annually.
6. Instructors will track and submit improvement reports based on course feedback, curriculum improvements, and standards alignments.

Defining of Roles and Instructor Classification

Online Support Specialist

Reports To

Online Learning Coordinator, Principal, Director of Student Services, or Building Administrator

Position Summary

The Online Support Specialist provides academic, communication, and technology support for students enrolled in online or blended learning courses. This position serves as a liaison between students, families, instructors, counselors, and school staff to ensure students remain engaged, supported, and successful in the online learning environment.

The Online Support Specialist monitors student attendance, course progress, and academic performance while assisting families with communication, educational advocacy, and technology -related needs. The position promotes student accountability, organization , engagement, and access to instructional support.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Student Support & Advocacy

- Monitor student participation, attendance, and course engagement in online courses
- Advocate for student educational needs and support services
- Assist students in developing organization, time management, and study skills
- Identify students who may be at risk academically or behaviorally
- Coordinate interventions and support plans with teachers, counselors, and administrators
- Encourage student self-advocacy and communication with instructors
- Support students in meeting assignment deadlines and academic expectations
- Assist with student onboarding and orientation to online learning systems

Parent/Guardian Communication

- Maintain regular communication with parents/guardians regarding student progress
- Provide weekly course progress and attendance reports to families
- Notify parents/guardians of missing assignments, attendance concerns, or academic risks
- Serve as a point of contact for family questions regarding online learning
- Facilitate communication between families and online instructors
- Support parent understanding of CANVAS and online course expectations
- Maintain professional and confidential communication practices

Technology Assistance

- Assist students and families with accessing CANVAS and other educational technology tools
- Troubleshoot basic technology issues related to devices, passwords, internet access, and course navigation
- Support students in submitting assignments and participating in virtual learning activities
- Provide guidance on digital learning tools and online classroom procedures
- Coordinate with district technology staff for advanced technical support needs
- Promote responsible digital citizenship and technology use

Attendance & Progress Monitoring

- Track weekly attendance and participation in online courses
- Generate and distribute weekly progress reports for students and families
- Monitor grades, assignment completion, and student engagement data
- Maintain accurate documentation of communication and intervention efforts
- Report concerns regarding truancy, academic performance, or disengagement to administration
- Support implementation of district attendance and academic policies

Collaboration & Instructional Support

- Collaborate with instructors, counselors, special education staff, and administrators to support student success
- Assist in coordinating accommodations and modifications for students
- Help students access instructional resources and support services
- Reinforce instructional expectations and learning goals established by teachers
- Participate in student support meetings, intervention teams, and parent conferences
- Support implementation of district online learning procedures and initiatives

Qualifications

Required Qualifications

- Associate's degree, paraprofessional certification, or equivalent experience in education, student services, or technology support
- Strong communication and organizational skills
- Experience working with students, families, or educational programs
- Basic knowledge of educational technology systems
- Ability to maintain confidentiality and professionalism

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience with CANVAS Learning Management System
- Experience supporting online or blended learning environments
- Knowledge of student support services and intervention practices
- Experience in attendance monitoring or student engagement support
- Familiarity with Iowa educational systems and student support programs

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Strong interpersonal and relationship-building skills
- Ability to communicate effectively with students, parents, and staff
- Ability to monitor and interpret student progress data
- Problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively
- Technology troubleshooting and support skills
- Ability to support diverse student learning needs
- Strong attention to detail and documentation practices

Working Conditions

- School-based or remote technology-supported work environment
- Frequent use of computers, educational software, and communication platforms
- May require flexible scheduling for parent communication and student support
- Regular interaction with students, families, and staff members

Evaluation

Performance will be evaluated based on:

- Effectiveness of student support and communication
- Accuracy and consistency of attendance and progress monitoring
- Responsiveness to student and family needs
- Collaboration with instructional staff and administration
- Professionalism and confidentiality

- Contribution to student engagement and academic success

Example Responsibilities by Week

Weekly Responsibilities May Include:

- Reviewing student attendance and login activity
- Sending progress reports to parents/guardians
- Contacting students regarding missing assignments
- Assisting students with technology or course access issues
- Coordinating support meetings with teachers or counselors
- Monitoring student engagement within CANVAS
- Documenting communication and intervention efforts

Alignment to Educational Support Goals

The Online Support Specialist helps:

- Increase student engagement and attendance
- Improve communication between school and home
- Support student success in online learning environments
- Reduce barriers to technology and instructional access
- Promote student accountability and academic achievement
- Strengthen intervention and support systems for at-risk learners

Online Instructor Job Description

Position Title

Online Instructor

Reports To

Director of Curriculum, Principal, Department Chair, or Online Learning Coordinator

Position Summary

The Online Instructor is responsible for designing, facilitating, and managing high-quality online learning experiences for high school students through the CANVAS Learning Management System (LMS). The instructor delivers standards-aligned instruction, monitors student progress, communicates effectively with students and families, and supports student success in a virtual or blended learning environment.

The Online Instructor promotes student engagement, academic achievement, digital citizenship, and equitable access to learning while aligning instruction with Iowa Teaching Standards and district expectations.

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Instruction & Course Delivery

- Deliver engaging online instruction aligned to state and district standards
- Facilitate synchronous and asynchronous learning activities
- Maintain an organized and accessible CANVAS course structure
- Post weekly learning objectives, assignments, and instructional materials
- Utilize a variety of instructional strategies to support diverse learners
- Incorporate technology tools to enhance student learning and engagement
- Provide clear directions and expectations for assignments and assessments
- Differentiate instruction to meet student academic and learning needs

Student Engagement & Communication

- Maintain regular communication with students and families
- Respond to student questions and concerns in a timely manner
- Foster a positive and inclusive online classroom culture
- Monitor student participation and engagement
- Encourage student collaboration and discussion
- Promote digital citizenship and appropriate online behavior
- Support student motivation, accountability, and time management skills

Assessment & Feedback

- Assess student learning using formative and summative assessments
- Provide timely, constructive feedback on assignments and assessments
- Maintain accurate student grades and records in CANVAS
- Monitor student progress and intervene when academic concerns arise
- Utilize data to adjust instruction and support student achievement
- Maintain academic integrity within the online learning environment.
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Course Management & Technology

- Develop and maintain organized CANVAS modules and course materials
- Ensure accessibility standards are met for digital content
- Utilize multimedia tools and online resources effectively
- Troubleshoot basic technology issues related to course participation
- Maintain updated course content and instructional resources
- Follow district policies regarding online learning and student privacy

Professional Responsibilities

- Participate in professional development related to online teaching and learning
- Collaborate with colleagues, counselors, administrators, and support staff
- Maintain compliance with district policies and Iowa Teaching Standards
- Engage in continuous improvement of online instructional practices
- Participate in required meetings, trainings, and professional learning communities

Qualifications

Required Qualifications

- Valid Iowa teaching license appropriate to assignment
- Bachelor's degree in education or related field
- Experience with educational technology and learning management systems
- Strong written and verbal communication skills
- Ability to work independently and manage time effectively

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience teaching online or blended courses
- Experience using CANVAS LMS
- Knowledge of Iowa Academic Standards and Iowa Teaching Standards
- Experience with differentiated instruction and student engagement strategies
- Training in online course design or virtual instruction

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

- Strong organizational and time management skills
- Ability to build positive relationships in a virtual environment
- Knowledge of best practices in online instruction
- Ability to analyze student data and monitor progress
- Strong technology integration skills
- Ability to support diverse student learning needs
- Effective problem -solving and communication skills

Working Conditions

- Primarily remote or technology -based instructional environment
- Extended periods of computer and screen use
- Flexible scheduling may be required for virtual meetings or student support
- Frequent use of online communication platforms and educational technology

Evaluation

Performance will be evaluated in accordance with:

- Iowa Teaching Standards
- District evaluation procedures
- Online teaching best practices
- Student engagement and achievement data
- Professional responsibilities and communication expectations