



## **Traverse City Area Public Schools’ *Online Courses Questions and Answers***

### **Online Courses**

#### **What are online courses?**

Online courses are courses offered through an internet connection. The District offers students the opportunity to take online courses approved by the District. Online courses use video, text, audio, simulations and other interactive tools that are delivered primarily via the internet. Course content may be online or offline, with offline content usually being paper textbooks, other books such as novels for an English class or journal articles for a science class. The type of course, and teacher preferences, determine to what extent certain features are used. An English course might rely heavily on online and offline text; Spanish might rely on audio clips so that students can hear proper pronunciations; and a biology course might use animations demonstrating cell division in a way that no paper textbook can match. Regardless of the instructional materials used, teachers remain the central part of learning in the online classroom.

#### **Why are these courses offered?**

Accelerating technological change and globalization are eliminating barriers of time and space, dramatically expanding connections and interdependencies across the world. Globalization is driving important new educational themes in science and technology (information and communications technologies, nanotechnology, climate change, sustainable development) and in the social and political arenas (ethics and values, migration, health and welfare, cultural diversity and intercultural leadership). These changes present opportunities to today’s students that previous generations would have thought incredible, such as the chance to learn Mandarin Chinese from home, or to take an advanced course in emerging nanotechnologies. At the same time, they threaten to leave behind students, economics, and societies that are not keeping pace with today’s transformations.

#### **What online courses are available?**

Available courses are listed on the TCAPS’ Web site. To view available online course offerings, please visit [www.tcaps.net](http://www.tcaps.net); then select Student Programs; [Online Programs](#).

#### **How do I learn more about taking an online course?**

Those interested in taking an online course should talk with their counselors. There is an online survey which must be completed, printed, and shared with the counselor in determining if an online course is a good choice.

#### **Where do I take online courses?**

Online courses provide flexibility for students. They may be taken in school during the school day or off the school site on a student’s own time. If the course is scheduled at school, the student will be assigned to a room with access to a computer.

**Who pays for online courses?**

The District pays for students who take online courses as part of their school year schedule. Courses taken during the summer or are above and beyond the courses required in a school day, the cost is the responsibility of the student and his/her family.

**What is the Michigan Department of Education's position on this?**

Michigan has been at the forefront of states implementing online learning. In 2006 the Michigan legislature passed the country's first statewide online learning requirement for all graduating high school seniors.