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## **Congratulations**

Congratulations on your enrollment into Richard Milburn High School's (RMHS) Worldwide Internet Secondary Education (WISE) program. Over the last 25 years, RMHS has awarded more than 2000 diplomas to students, like you, who recognize the need to complete the requirements for a high school diploma. Whether you are taking one WISE course with RMHS or a complete program, RMHS stands ready to support your initiatives.

## **Welcome to WISE**

Welcome to your WISE Course. We hope you will have a successful and enjoyable online classroom experience. Although your teacher will be able to answer most of your questions, the following main office individuals are available for assistance:

Ms. Barbara Tamez and/or Amanda Donato (877) 888-WISE (9473) or email to [wise@rmhs.org](mailto:wise@rmhs.org)

Ms. Tamez coordinates enrollment and admission activities. She is also your main contact for grade transcript questions.

Mr. Greg Shields, Director and Guidance Counselor (540) 234-0690 or email to [gregshields@aol.com](mailto:gregshields@aol.com)

Mr. Shields serves as your online guidance counselor and is available to assist with course completion, attendance and academic questions. Additionally, Mr. Shields is always available to speak with parents and school counselors.

## **Before you Begin Your Course**

Before you begin your course please read all of the information contained in this guide. You will need to verify that you have the minimum hardware and software requirements and that you have Internet access via an Internet Service Provider (ISP). All WISE courses are delivered via the Internet. Please check that you have all the required materials listed on your course syllabus before you begin. If you do not have the required materials, please contact Ms. Barbara Tamez at (877) 888-WISE (9473) or email to [wise@rmhs.org](mailto:wise@rmhs.org).

## **Personal Preparation for Success**

You have made an important, positive decision to work toward completing your high school course requirements. Your personal motivation may be driven by academic or vocational goals, such as attending college or joining the military or getting a better job. Whatever your goals are - you have made a commitment to begin to work toward those goals by enrolling in the WISE program. Your willingness to commit time and effort to reaching your goals will help you successfully complete your WISE course.

## **Blackboard Student Manual**

Blackboard applications are the software used to create WISE high school classes. A unique feature of your Blackboard class is that there are no live scheduled meeting times during which students and teachers gather as a class. In Blackboard, you work at

your own pace and complete assignments within a set timeframe regardless of where you reside. A word used to describe a class with this kind of flexibility is asynchronous. Asynchronous classes remove geographic boundaries and allow you to interact with teachers and students in different time zones as one coherent class. This kind of flexibility makes it possible for students living in Virginia to take classes with students living in Russia...or anywhere in the world.

To acclimatize yourself to Blackboard, please review the Blackboard Student Manual that is located behind the EXTERNAL LINK menu button inside the WISE classroom. This manual provides an overview of how to navigate within the Blackboard classroom environment.

## **School and Classroom Policy**

Just like a traditional school, the WISE Classroom has certain policies, guidelines and procedures that must be followed. Please read and familiarize yourself with the following school policy:

### **Attendance**

Students are expected to attend and participate in the WISE classroom. Students who do not follow WISE attendance procedures may be withdrawn from class.

Attendance is defined by evidence that a student has logged into class, submitted an assignment or interacted with a class group within any continuous 48 hour period.

### **Attendance Policy**

Unless otherwise approved by the teacher, any student who does not login within any continuous 48 hour period is considered absent. If this absence continues for more than 72 hours, the student may be automatically withdrawn.

### **Student Attendance and Participation Policy**

Unless otherwise approved by the teacher, any student who does not login within a continuous 48 hour period is considered absent and reported to the WISE Counseling Office. Weekends are excluded from this period. If this absence continues for more than 72 hours without teacher approval, the student may be automatically withdrawn from the program. Student's who fail to turn in an assignments or complete required tasks within the timeframe specified by the instructor may also face withdrawal from the program.

If a student fails to login, submit an assignment or interact with the instructor within any 48 hour period, the following actions may be taken:

The instructor emails the student a copy of the WISE Attendance and Participation Policy and directs the student to immediately verify his/her intentions to attend and participate in class.

If the student does not respond to this email and continues to be absent for a continuous 72 hour period, the teacher telephones the parents. If the student or parents do not respond within the next 24 hours of this contact, the student will be withdrawn from class and reported to the school of record.

## **Tracking & Monitoring Attendance**

Student attendance and participation are tracked by the course software and classroom teachers. WISE students are allowed a 48 hour window of opportunity to participate prior to being officially recorded as absent from class.

## **Interacting With Your Teacher**

Your class is taught by a certified teacher who is available for regular assistance. Just as it is expected that your teacher will communicate with you, you are expected to interact with your teacher. If for any reason you are not receiving a response or communication from your teacher within 24-48 hours from the time you emailed, immediately contact Greg Shields at [gregshields@aol.com](mailto:gregshields@aol.com).

## **Discipline Policy**

Just as in the traditional classroom, WISE students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately. Courteous, timely and well-informed participation is expected throughout the entire term. Use of profanity, off-color remarks or rudeness is not acceptable.

## ***Discipline Procedures***

Initially, students requiring counseling for discipline issues are counseled by WISE teachers or a WISE academic counselor. If the teacher believes the counseling did not work, parents are immediately contacted via email or telephone. This email contains a description of the discipline issue, an explanation of the consequences if disciplinary issues continue and recommendations on how to remedy the situation. Once the discipline issue is discussed with the student, parents receive a follow-up email reporting the outcome and current classroom status.

## **Eligibility**

WISE classes are open to all students. Courses are designed for individualized instruction in order to accommodate the unique needs of all students.

## **Enrollment**

You are considered enrolled when you have successfully completed the WISE Student Orientation. Being registered for a WISE class DOES NOT qualify as being enrolled.

Any unapproved absence after the completion of the WISE Student Orientation on behalf of the student will be consideration for withdrawal from the program.

## Extension of Time to Complete Class

If you do not complete all of the course requirements within the allotted time frame an extension may be authorized to submit final work products. Please contact your teacher in advance to request this extension.

## Final Exams

RMHS requires that a proctor administer your final exam. Please refer to your application packet for the process to select a proctor and how to submit your final exam.

## Honor Code

Students are expected to adhere to the WISE Code of Honor. WISE distance learning requires the highest standard of academic conduct. It is unacceptable for a student to commit plagiarism or any other form of cheating. If an instructor has reasonable evidence that cheating has occurred he/she will report the misdeed to the school administrator and the student's parents will be notified. The students receive a zero for the course work in question and may be subject to expulsion from the course and/or program.

## Grading Information

### Grading Scale

93-100	A
84-92	B
74-83	C
65-73	D
64 & below	F

## Graduation Requirements (Virginia High School)

English	4 units
Mathematics	2 units
Science	2 units
Math or Science	1 units
Social Studies	1 units
U.S. History	1 units
U.S. Government	1 units
Electives	9 units
<b>Total</b>	<b>21 units</b>

**NOTE:** 1 July 2006 Unit requirement will increase to **22**.

## **Withdrawal Policy**

### ***Voluntary***

RMHS will honor a withdrawal if we are informed within five days of class start date in writing by either a student and parent or a student and counselor.

### ***Non-voluntary***

Students who do not login to the WISE classroom within a continuous 48 hour are considered absent and may be withdrawn. Students who do not login during any continuous 72 hour period will be withdrawn from class.

## Login Directions

To enroll in your **WISE** class you will need to connect through your Internet Service Provider on your computer. When you have established an Internet connection, please do the following:

1. Type in the following URL: <http://richardmilburnschools.blackboard.com>
2. Click on the Login Button to start the process.
3. Enter the Username and Password, provided by RMHS, via email, in the appropriate boxes. If a username and password were not provided check with the school to see how to obtain one.
4. Once you complete the login, you will access the “My Institution” page. This page will contain the list of courses that you are enrolled in and on the left of the screen you will see the “Tools” section. In this section you will see buttons for announcements, calendar, grades, email and personal information. Spend a few minutes familiarizing yourself with these different areas.
5. When you are ready to enter your course, click on your course under the heading “My Courses”.
6. When you enter a course you will immediately see the “Announcements” page. Your teacher will use this area to post announcements for the students in the course.
7. Use the navigation buttons on the left side of the screen to view the various areas of the course. For a more detailed description of the different areas refer to the Student and Classroom Policy in the “Tools” area, or go to the “WISE Orientation” classroom to access more detailed information.

If you experience difficulty with any of the above areas please email ([WISE@rmhs.org](mailto:WISE@rmhs.org)) or call our toll free number (1-877-888-WISE [9473]) immediately and a member of our staff will assist you.

## Technical Support and Requirements Guidelines

If you encounter any technical issues regarding your WISE class, your first step is to email Amanda Donato [WISE@rmhs.org](mailto:WISE@rmhs.org) with a short, yet descriptive message, explaining your problem. The more detail and accurate information you provide---the better possibility of a quick solution from Amanda. The occasional technical glitches that student's experiences are similar and in many instances Amanda has already solved the same problem with another student.

**For technical support, Amanda may be contacted in the following ways:**

Email: [WISE@rmhs.org](mailto:WISE@rmhs.org) (All Email requests for technical support are answered within 24 hours)

Toll Free Telephone: 1-877-888-WISE(9473)

### Other Suggestions for Technical Support

Over the years, Amanda has created a file of the most Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about WISE. Most likely, the answer to your technical question can be found by reviewing the FAQs at RMHS's website [www.rmhs.org](http://www.rmhs.org), or by visiting the FAQ link under the External Links Tab of your WISE Class.

If your technical problem has not been solved within 48 hours, please contact Greg Shields at [gregshields@aol.com](mailto:gregshields@aol.com) who will direct a technician to immediately call you to resolve your technical issue.

### ***What happens if you get behind in your WISE class due to a technical glitch?***

WISE teachers understand that technical problems do occur. As long as you are communicating with your teacher and fully explaining your situation, extra time will be allowed to submit assignments or make up work as appropriate.

## ***System Requirements***

Email

You should have an email account that can be accessed daily.

### **Hardware and Software Minimum Requirements**

The following hardware and software are *minimum* specifications to work with the Blackboard application:

**Platform:** Windows 95, 98, 2000, NT, or ME; MacOS 9 or MacOS X

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**Hardware:** 64 MB of RAM, 1 G of free disk space

**Software:** Microsoft Word, Adobe Acrobat Reader, Microsoft PowerPoint Viewer

**Browser:** Internet Explorer 5.5 or Netscape 4.78 (NOTE: JavaScript & Cookies must be enabled.

**Modem:** 56 K or higher

## Hints For Success

It is very important to complete activities daily to avoid completing numerous assignments at the last minute. Although the new freedom of learning over the Internet can be exhilarating, it requires a responsible, organized and disciplined approach to completing tasks and assignments. The following are a few guidelines for consideration:

Introduce yourself (via email) to your teacher the first day of class and inform them of any special concerns or considerations you may have while participating in your WISE class.

Just like a regular classroom, you are expected to participate fully in all assignments.

All assignments should be completed by due dates. If this is not possible, your teacher should be contacted immediately. Don't procrastinate.

Each time you log on, you should read all announcements and discussion comments.

Technical problems will always be an issue when computers are involved. Access speed can be slow, computers can do strange things and "things" just happen. SO...plan for these problems and NEVER wait until the last minute to do your work and NEVER blame the computer for disappearing homework. It would be better to say your dog ate the homework than to blame your computer. If you are having technical difficulties, immediately notify your teacher and request assistance.

## 10 Steps to a Successful Online Course Experience

1. **Be Interested.** There's no point in turning in an application for an online course that you don't want to take in the first place. You'll be more successful as a student if you start the program with the desire to succeed.
2. **Have Drive.** Be ready to do the work, be ready to devote yourself to learning. Conjure up the self motivation to be successful.
3. **Have Time.** Make sure that when you commit to taking an online course, you have time to log in, turn in assignments, and do the homework.
4. **Complete Assignments.** Make sure to complete assignments in a timely manner, and turn them in on schedule. Work at a pace that's comfortable for you, but make steady progress.
5. **Study!** It's easy to confuse the convenience of an online course with an automatic passing grade. You have to study, sometimes more than with a regular classroom course. The convenience comes with being able to study whenever, wherever.
6. **Ask Questions.** Don't be afraid to ask for clarification. Not having the teacher in front of you may make you hesitant to ask for help when you are having trouble. Don't be! They are there to help you get the most out of your online experience.
7. **Follow Directions.** The lesson plans and PowerPoint slides are there to serve as a study guide for you. Follow the advice of the instructor for the maximum positive impact on your online course.
8. **Technical Familiarity.** Make sure that you can do what might be asked of you in taking an online course, such as sending emails and attachments, downloading files, uploading files, and web navigation, to name a few. This could hinder your progress if you are unsure of your abilities.
9. **Have Internet Access.** This may sound silly, but you cannot be successful if you do not have regular, reliable access to the Internet. Even the public libraries can close, or their systems will shut down for maintenance. It is recommended that you have an internet service provider in your home before committing to taking an online course.
10. **Have Email.** Also another glossed over point. You must have your own working, existing email account to participate in our online courses. You cannot use your mom or dad's work address, or a friend from school. They are not doing the course; you are.

**By following the above listed steps, you will be well on your way to the successful completion of your online course with WISE!**

## Parent Involvement

Parent involvement and awareness play an important role in online learning. The WISE class design and instructional strategy creates an optimum opportunity for parents to stay involved in student learning. Course materials, class projects, grades and even assignment due dates are posted on a Blackboard Learning System and easily accessible to parents and guardians. This easy access to Blackboard allows parents to participate fully in the online class environment. If necessary, teachers can even create discussion boards to allow parents to interact with one another or use the Virtual Classroom to host web-based parent conferences.

### Course Materials and Class Projects

Most importantly, WISE classes provide parents a snapshot of the kinds of assignments, class projects and work requirements expected of students. Parents can even check the Drop Box to confirm whether homework has been submitted or returned.

### Hints for Parents

The following hints can be used as a guide on how parents can best stay involved in WISE classes:

- Parents may find it beneficial to complete the WISE Orientation for a better understanding on how to navigate and use Blackboard.
- Request password access to view student work, assignments and progress.

Provide the teacher an email address and telephone number where you can be reached on a daily basis. If you do not have an email address, share the one being used by the student.

- Review class materials and assignment due dates to become acquainted with teacher expectations and class requirements.

Make sure you are aware of examination dates and grading policy.

- Make it a point to inquire about mid term grade status.

If at any time throughout the term you have questions, first email the teacher and ask for answers. If you continue to have questions, email Greg Shields, Director and Guidance Counselor ([gregshields@aol.com](mailto:gregshields@aol.com)) for assistance.

## Course Descriptions

### English 9

Prerequisite: none

This course contains assignments related to specific literary genres including but not limited to drama, poetry, and short stories. In addition to the reading assignments, each module contains writing assignments with opportunity for revision, grammar lessons, and literary analysis assignments. Reading will cover a variety of genres from different cultures and eras. Writing assignments will have an emphasis on the writing process.

CR: 1

### English 10

Prerequisite: English 9 or equivalent

This class encompasses many aspects of the English language and literature. A major part of this course will be the study of literature using comprehensive anthology. This is the study of literary genres: plays, poetry, short stories, nonfiction, and novel. These selections also emphasize our literary heritage through the reading of both classical and modern pieces. Students will utilize writing skills in the composition of written essays.

CR: 1

### English 11

Prerequisite: English 10 or equivalent

Students will read and analyze the relationship among American literature, history, and culture. Literary movements will be described and contrasted while students explore and differentiate among characters. Informational texts will provide a study of vocabulary, composition, and style. Persuasive writing, business writing, and research papers will be assigned so students develop a practical writing application.

CR: 1

### English 12

Prerequisite: English 11 or equivalent

Students are introduced to works from the entire spectrum of British literature from the Anglo-Saxon period up to contemporary writings. Writing assignments will cover essay composition,

analytical writing, and technical writing skills. Opportunities to individualize course work in both reading and writing will be provided through assignment options and independent reading.

CR: 1

### Practical English

Prerequisite: none

Students are introduced to a variety of business skills with concentration on writing and grammar proficiency. Writing assignments will cover resume writing, job applications, and technical writing. This course is designed to meet the needs of students going directly into the work world as well as those going on to further education. Opportunities to individualize course work will be provided through assignment options and independent reading.

CR: 1, Elective

### Environmental Science

Prerequisite: none

Students will use scientific inquiry to pose questions, seek answers and design solutions for environmental issues. Students acquire knowledge of basic scientific concepts of systems and use them in interpreting phenomena of the real world. Students will demonstrate scientific knowledge and thinking skills by writing a research paper on an environmental problem using the problem solving approach.

CR: 1

### Biology I

Prerequisite: none

Students will explore the relationships among facts, concepts, and principles of Biology. They will develop study skills, communication skills, science process skills, and mathematics skills as they proceed through this course. Mathematics is the language of the scientist, so this course encourages students to apply mathematics in order to illustrate the close relationship between math and science.

CR: 1

### Chemistry

Prerequisite: Biology I

This course will study the classification, phases, and structure of matter and energy. Students will study the properties of chemical bonds, types of solutions, and energy and chemical reactions. Students will explore different methods and measurements of scientific study and applications used by scientists. This course will give the students the opportunity to conduct their own research following standard practices and procedures of scientists followed by presentation of their findings.

CR: 1

### Understanding Economics

Prerequisite: none

This course will allow students to read a variety of cases that illustrate basic economic concepts. Students complete assignments directly related to each case. Students engage in discussion of current economic issues that are tied into the case themes. Students complete two basic economic research assignments from a list topics that are also tied to the case themes.

CR: 1, Elective

### Algebra I

Prerequisite: none

Algebra I introduces the use of mathematical expressions to solve both real world and theoretical problems. Through this course, students will become mathematical problems solvers as they explore and apply the concepts of equations and solution methods. This course will allow students to make connections between Algebraic concepts, activities, applications, technology, disciplines, and cultures.

CR: 1

### Geometry

Prerequisite: Algebra I

The study of this course will provide a learning base for students to better understand and analyze certain aspects of their surroundings and apply mathematical concepts to real-life situations. Students will apply formulas and mathematical equations to solve and analyze problems. Throughout this course, students will build on prior knowledge of Algebra and other areas of mathematics. Students will study various geometric concepts and how these skills are applied.

CR: 1

## Algebra II

Prerequisite: Geometry

This course is designed to approach Algebra II in a practical format, giving students applicable skills and understanding of advance Algebra concepts. Students learn steps in problem solving using algebraic properties appropriately. Students will study various advanced Algebra concepts and how these skills are applied in the work environment and everyday situations. During this course students will explore the different representations of functions by interpretation and graphing. Students will learn how to use and apply skills as they are taught both mentally and utilizing a TI-82 graphing calculator.

CR: 1

## World History I

Prerequisite: none

World History is a course in which students examine the political, economic, social and cultural growth of cultures and nations from ancient times to today. Students study major cultural and technological developments and their impact on societies and individuals. Critical thinking, writing, research and group discussion skills are refined. Students will recognize the migration of pre-historic humans throughout the world; compare the rise and development of societies; explain the events, technologies and ideas that shaped societies; review changes that occur through history in world societies; compare and contrast the elements of societies around the world.

CR: 1

## World History II

Prerequisite: World History I or equivalent

World History is a course in which students examine the political, economic, social and cultural growth of cultures and nations from ancient times to today. Students study major cultural and technological developments and their impact on societies and individuals. Critical thinking, writing, research and group discussion skills are refined. Students will trace and examine the development of World History from the early Middle Ages to Modern Times; perform effective historical research and analysis; know significant dates, names, places, events and ideas; recognize the impacts of politics, culture, and economics from the Middle Ages to the Modern Time period; differentiate among events of major ages and eras of World History and analyze their implications

CR: 1, Elective

## US History

Prerequisite: World History I

U.S. History is a course in which students examine the political, economic, social and cultural growth of the United States. Students study major historical developments and their impact on contemporary society and the individual. Map and globe reading, critical thinking, writing, research and group process skills are refined. Students will trace and examine the development of U.S. History from early discoveries to modern times; recognize major issues, movements, people, and events; analyze the impact of other cultures on the growth and development of the United States; demonstrate knowledge of events and issues of the various periods and significant events of U.S. history.

CR: 1

### US Government

Prerequisite: US History

US Government is a course in which students examine the structure and function of American government at the national, state, and local levels. This course focuses on political decision-making and the student's role as a citizen and participant in American constitutional government. Critical thinking, writing, research, and group process skills are emphasized. Students will understand the importance of the political and civic beliefs, values, and principles that support and maintain American constitutional government and understand the workings of their own and other political systems; identify and understand rights and responsibilities as citizens of the United States.

CR: 1

### Career Exploration

Prerequisite: none

Career Exploration is a course that addresses standards from the reading, writing, technology, and economics strands. Students will develop study skills, communication skills, and thinking skills, as they proceed through this course. Students will find a career vision of a productive future and how to make that vision a reality. Also, they will inherit an appreciation of the relevance of school learning to "real life."

CR: 1, Elective

### Introduction to Psychology

Prerequisite: none

There has been a long history of fascination with the subject matter of psychology; the scientific study of human and animal behavior. Along with literature, philosophy,

science, and history; it is considered one of the pathways leading to an enhanced understanding of human behavior. The study of psychology offers a way to learn more about why people, including you, do what they do. This introduction to psychology is designed to stimulate your interest in and expand your knowledge of the field of psychology; to assist you in gaining an understanding of the multiple causes of behavior; to offer you an opportunity to gain some knowledge of the methods that can produce behavioral change; and to provide you with opportunities to apply these interests and this knowledge directly to everyday issues and concerns.

CR: 1, Elective

