

2025-2026

STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK

HAMTRAMCK VIRTUAL LEARNING INSTITUTE



Virtual Learning Institute

Mission Statement

We engage, elevate, and empower our students.

Vision

Our students succeed and transform the future.

I. Welcome

Welcome to the Hamtramck Virtual Learning Institute (VLI)! This handbook will help provide clarity for our program. Please refer to this handbook throughout the school year to answer any questions.

This handbook gives a brief overview of the VLI program and its policies. A more in-depth orientation email will be sent out.

Participation in the program has the same requirements as in-person courses at Hamtramck Public Schools. Students are bound by the standards and requirements set forth by the Hamtramck Public Schools Board and the student handbook. Participation in this program is a privilege.

Students enrolled in VLI are Hamtramck Public School students, and are still students at their assigned buildings. That means a 10th grade VLI student is still a student at Hamtramck High School, allowing that student to join any high school clubs or attend any events held at the high school.

II. The Virtual Learning Institute (VLI)

The Hamtramck VLI program provides a full-time virtual option for students to continue working on a high school diploma or grade progression without physically attending at a school building (attendance is virtual and required). Graduation requirements for VLI students are the same as for in person students.

Hamtramck Public Schools will deliver all of a pupil's instruction online with minimal requirement for the pupil to attend instruction physically on-site. This program includes face-to-face virtual instruction through an internet-connected learning environment.

Every Virtual Learning student will have a class schedule created by their school that details the credits to be earned over the semester. Each course shall be counted as one class on the student's schedule. Students **must** participate in their grade level state and local assessment exams at the building..

The district will use certified Michigan teachers as teacher of record and will designate an on-site (at the enrollment building on Conant) VLI Specialist. The student's mentor and the VLI Specialist will monitor the student' progress, daily attendance, and be available for assistance.

****Students must successfully complete a virtual or in-person student orientation course before they start their classes****



Parents are required to provide one or two working phone numbers and an email address to the HPS administration office for communication. Parents will be set up with an observer account to monitor academics once a valid email is provided.

III. VLI Staff

There are a number of staff that will be available to help support students, below will be a brief overview of the different people that make up VLI.

Mentor: Mentors are assigned to students, and are responsible for completing two-way communication with each student for attendance. They are also responsible for updating parents on overall grades, and checking in with students on a weekly basis to help support them. A student will only have one mentor. (The VLI Specialist will be the mentor for all students)

Teacher: Teachers are responsible for teaching courses, they will grade assignments, teach live lessons, and offer tutoring. Questions about a specific class should be directed to that course's teacher. Students will have six teachers, one for each class. All teachers will be certified online teachers provided by Pearson.

VLI Specialist: The VLI Program Coordinator. They are the person responsible for enrolling students on Pearson, and running orientations to get students started. They are also available for support or to answer any questions from either students or parents. Similar to the role of a principal at a school building.

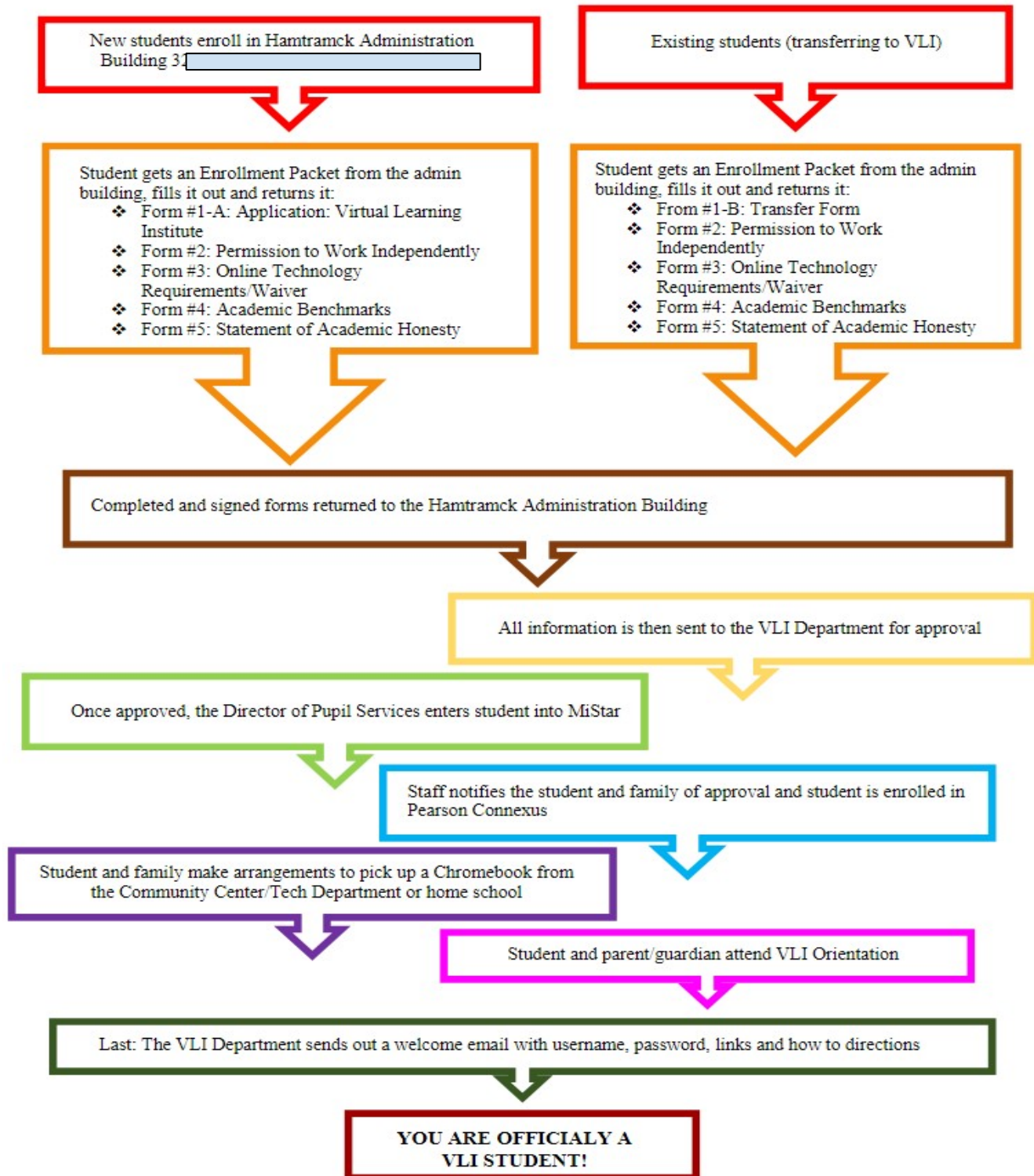
The staff listed above are VLI Specific staff. Students still have access to other Hamtramck staff for support. For example, high school VLI students have the same counselors as in person students. SPED and ML support staff are also available for VLI students. Students can reach out to the VLI Specialist if they need assistance getting in contact with other district staff.

IV. Curriculum

The online curriculum used is Pearson Connexus. All of a student's coursework will be housed here. Each student will receive a welcome email that has their login information, as well as a link to the website. Please note that students will not be able to log in to Pearson unless they are first logged in through their Hamtramck Google account. Students can access their courses on any computer, as long as they can log in to their school account first.



III. Enrollment Process





V. Attendance and Course Progress

Attendance is essential for online academic success and that comes with self-discipline. It is highly recommended that all students create a daily schedule for themselves and adhere to it. While students do not attend physically, they do attend virtually.

The student will adhere to the school's timelines for completion of course requirements each semester. Progress is clearly displayed in each course within Pearson. Pearson, like Hamtramck Schools, runs courses by semester:

- ❖ End of Quarter 1 students should be at 50% or more course completion
- ❖ End of Quarter 2 students should be at 100% course completion
- ❖ End of Quarter 3 students should be at 50% or more course completion
- ❖ End of Quarter 4 students should be at 100% course completion

Class end dates are listed on Pearson and Pearson automatically provides students with a schedule of what assignments to work on based on how many school days are left. Since the pace is provided for students, it's important to think of VLI as a **Self-Driven** program, rather than a Self-Paced program.

While students are allowed to work ahead in their courses, they will not be allowed to take the final exam in a course, until the week that the course is due.



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****Extensions will not be allowed unless there is a medical reason with a valid medical report/documentation****

Week 1: If student does not complete two-way communication, they will receive additional phone calls and email attempts from their Mentor

Week 2: If student misses attendance for two consecutive weeks, they will continue to receive phone calls from their mentor and the VLI Specialist. Their parent/guardian will also begin receiving communications letting them know of the situation.

Week 3: If student fails to make attendance for a third consecutive week. Student will be placed on Home Visit Log and will be visited at home by a Hamtramck Community Facilitator. VLI Home Visit letter will also be delivered.

Week 4: After four consecutive weeks of missed attendance with no communication from either the student or parent/guardian, student will be removed from the VLI Program. To re-enroll for in-person learning student must meet with Pupil Services at Central Office.

Attendance requires weekly **two-way communication** between the student and the mentor. Failure to communicate weekly with the mentor may result in removal from the VLI program.

- Two-way communication is a back-and-forth interaction between a student and their mentor, about the student's academic progress. Working on classes is not enough to be considered present, there must be this consistent communication.
- Students with an IEP or 504 plan are also required to have regular contact with the Special Education Providers assigned to provide services per the IEP. Students are required to meet with their assigned Special Education teacher and related services providers via zoom or in-person. If it is noted that the student is unable to operate at the independent level, the IEP Team may make a recommendation for the student to return to in-person learning.
- Multilingual students are also required to have regular communication with the Multilingual Education Providers assigned to provide services. Students are required to meet with their assigned Multilingual teacher. If it is noted that the student is unable to operate at an independent level, the Multilingual Team may make a recommendation for the student to return to in-person learning.

It is expected that students will log-in and work on their courses every school day. It is also required for students to spend 20 to 25 hours per week working in Pearson spending at least 45 minutes a school day per



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core course and 30 minutes per elective class. Courses are always available to the students to be worked on, even on weekends and holidays.

Due to how the state of Michigan tracks virtual attendance, VLI weeks run from **Wednesday to Tuesday** instead of Monday to Friday. **This only affects how attendance is tracked.**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<-----week 1----->			
			Count Day			
-----week 1----->			<-----week 2----->			
-----week 2----->			<-----week 3----->			
-----week 3----->			<-----week 4----->			
-----week 4----->						

Attendance Responsibilities

- Attendance is logged weekly by the student's mentor.
- Students must log-in and work on every course, every school day that they have assignments due.
- All families must attend a Student/Parent Orientation.
- Families must maintain regular communication with the VLI Specialist via email or phone.
- Students and parents must check their email, webmail, and phone messages daily. Return response should be within or on the next school day.
- Students must attend Live Lesson sessions regularly for direct instruction as scheduled by their teachers.

Reporting Absences: Please email the teachers if your student will be absent and unable to attend Live Lesson sessions. Please state the reason for the absence in the email as well as the expected duration of the absence.

No Internet Access or Power Outage: It is an expectation for attendance that all students have reliable internet access in the home. Students who are unable to log-in to Pearson or have a power outage must have an alternative plan to go to another location with computer access to do their school work. If the student does not have a back-up plan, and cannot go to another location, the student must notify his or her teachers the reason for the absence.

Excused Absences: The school recognizes student illness; death in the family; prior permission to leave school by parents and/or administrator; approved family vacations; approved college visitations; required court appearances; religious observations; family emergencies; or counseling or administrative appointments to be excused. Regardless of the reason for the absence, students are expected to make-up school work.

Unexcused Absences: An unexcused absence is an absence not recognized by state law or the Virtual Learning Institute. Unexcused absences may result in loss of credit for the course or withdrawal from the program. One week of missed attendance is the equivalent of missing five days of in person learning.



Doctor/Medical Excuses: Students must present doctors' notes when they are absent from school for five or more school days consecutively due to illness. Parent should send doctors' notes to the assigned teachers through email:

- pcashen@hamtramckschools.org

Being sick for only a few days, does not excuse students entirely from that week's attendance requirement.

Excessive Absences: When students have accrued 3 consecutive weekly absences (excused or unexcused) a student and parent will need to meet with the VLI Specialist regarding their excessive absences. Students will be exited from the district if they do not make attendance contacts, in accordance to HPS Board Policy.

Scheduled Breaks and Unexpected School Closures: VLI students get all scheduled breaks, assignments will not be due on days that the district is closed. However, courses are always available for students to work on. Students will still be responsible for assignments due during weather days.

VI. Student Commitment

It is expected that students will:

- Be committed to their academics, adhere to the course schedules, and communicate with course instructor(s) and VLI staff on a regular basis.
- Regularly attend scheduled Special Education Tutorial Sessions and meet with related service providers as indicated per their IEP. (If student has an IEP)
- Regularly attend scheduled Multilingual support Sessions and meet with related service providers as indicated by the Multilingual Team. (If the student is a Multilingual learner and takes the WIDA test)
- Work according to pacing guides to complete each course by the end of each semester.
- Understand that extensions will not be given without medical documentation.
- Refrain from inappropriate use of information with any online course such as cheating and plagiarism.
(<https://www.plagiarism.org/article/what-is-plagiarism>)
- Adhere to all academic integrity requirements outlined in the student handbook and the student orientation course.
- Follow the Hamtramck Schools Student Code of Conduct.
- **Pass 4 out of their 6 first semester classes, or be asked to return to in person learning for 2nd semester**

VII. Cheating/Plagiarism

Let's talk about PLAGIARISM...Plagiarism is when you use someone else's words or ideas and pass them off as your own. This includes using AI to help you with writing assignments. Plagiarism is cheating, and will not be allowed.

All of the following are considered plagiarism:



- Turning in someone else's work as your own
- Using AI to complete an assignment for you.
- Copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- Failing to put a quote in quotation marks
- Giving incorrect information about the source of a quote
- Changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- Copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not.

Tips to avoid PLAGIARISM:

Use your own words. Jumbling up the way someone else wrote something does not mean it's in your own words.

- Rearranging paragraphs and sentences taken from somewhere else – even leaving out or changing some of the words – does NOT make it your own.
- State your sources. If you got information from somewhere, state where you got it.
- When in doubt - If you're not sure if you used someone else's ideas or words - state your source to cover your bases or, reach out to your teachers.
- Don't rush through your assignments and try to find the answers online.
- Take time to consider the assignment and come up with your own thoughts and ideas.

Use of AI (Artificial Intelligence):

It is important to note that while AI (Artificial Intelligence) is widely used in our society, it should only be used by a VLI student to supplement learning, not as a replacement for learning. Likewise, if a student turns in AI-generated work as their sole submission for an assignment, this is considered plagiarism and will be dealt with similarly. If you are unsure if the way you are using AI is ok, reach out to your teacher to ask them.

VIII. Parent/Guardian Commitment

The role of the parent/guardian is critical to student success. Expectations include:

- Parent/guardian participation in their child's education will help determine the student's likelihood of success. Therefore, the parent/guardian is expected to help monitor and support the child in their studies; agree to be accessible to the VLI staff to discuss the child's progress; promote regular attendance; and time management of the child's participation.
- The parent/guardian must maintain reasonable internet availability for the learner and contact Hamtramck Public School's office and technology department immediately if there is a difficulty with internet access during the school year.
- Provide transportation for students to attend mandatory testing, such as the SAT and MSTEP. VLI Staff will do their best to provide testing information ahead of time so arrangements can be made.



- Parents must provide a working email and will be signed up as an observer on Pearson which will allow students' grades to be monitored 24/7. An email with instructions on how to access the observer account will be sent out.

IX. Acceptable Use

It is the responsibility of the student to know the contents of any Acceptable Use Policies found in the student handbook of the Hamtramck Public Schools. Anything that students do in the course(s) taken can be retrieved and monitored by the specialist/coordinator/instructor at any time.

X. Tests and Exams

Students enrolled full-time in the district's Virtual Learning Institute must take all the grade appropriate state assessment exams onsite. **This includes but is not limited to, tests such as the iReady, WIDA, and SAT.**

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to attend State Testing?

Yes, it is required by the State of Michigan. Testing will be held in person. Information about testing locations/times will be provided for you.

How do I check my grades?

By logging into Pearson under the homepage, move to your class Landing Page. On this page, you will see a list of options listed in your upper left. Select the Gradebook option to view your student grades. This page will continually be updated, so make sure you are always checking your grades. If your parents ask to see your grades, you will always have access to this page to show them.

How do I transfer out of the VLI Program?

The VLI Program submits final class grades each semester, however if you wish to transfer out of the VLI Program, you will need to follow a few simple steps:

1. Meet with your VLI teachers to verify that you are making the right choice.
2. You and your parent/guardian will meet with the VLI Specialist at the VLI Learning Lab to discuss your request.
3. Your request will be relayed to both your school counselors to verify your decision.
4. Your records will be transferred from the VLI Program to your destination school.
5. You will start back in-person immediately after receiving verification from your counselor.

Important to note, that final decision on allowing students to transfer back in person is made by the school, not the VLI program.

*****Transfers are freely allowed during start of the school year, summer, and the transition between 1st and 2nd semester*****



What do I do if I need tutoring?

1. Contact your teacher or mentor and set up a time to meet, either in person, or through zoom
2. If you need further tutoring, you can contact Pearson at 1-844-597-3224.

Will I be able to work on my courses outside of the country?

No, students must reside in Michigan to be able to work on your courses. If you are outside of the country for longer than two weeks, you will be exited from the program. You will be allowed to re-enroll into VLI as long as you notify your Mentor when you'll be gone ahead of time.

How to screenshot/print screen and then paste to a document?

There is usually a print screen button on every Windows computer. It is generally at the top right of the keyboard. It usually says [PrtSc] or [Print Screen] you can push that button plus the [Ctrl] button at the same time. Once you have done that it will save to your computer. You will open a document using any compatible program and paste the saved screenshot to that document using the [Ctrl] plus the [V] button pushed together.

How to create a folder on desktop/ save files to be uploaded?

Right click anywhere on your desktop and then hover over "New". Select Folder from this menu. It will then prompt you to name the folder. Once it is named you can add files to it by saving the file and selecting [Desktop] then the folder you created. The new named folder will now appear as an icon on the desktop.

What should I do if you're having a tech issue?

1. **Contact your Mentor/VLI Specialist**
2. Call Pearson at 1-844-597-3224 if it's a an issue with Pearson
3. Contact the HPS Family & Student Chromebook Support if it's a chromebook issue.

Phone 313.591.7450

Make sure to include a name and phone number where you can be reached.

Hours: 8:00am - 2:30pm, Monday / Wednesday / Friday (Line closes at 2:15)

Located downstairs in the Community Center:

11350 Charest Street

Hamtramck, MI 48212

*****Be sure to have your device charged when someone from the tech department returns your call*****

XI. Staff and Contact Numbers

Pearson Family Technical Support: 1-844-597-3224

VLI Specialist

- Patrick Cashen
- Email: pcashen@hamtramckschools.org
- Phone: 313-661-0250



XII. Communications

In our ongoing effort to provide parents/guardians with the latest in school information, each building and the District publishes regular online website communications including emails and newsletters to keep families informed of upcoming school events, meetings, district/state testing dates, etc.

HPS is making every effort to reduce the volume of paper usage by providing communication documents electronically. Thank you for helping the District use technology to enhance communication and contributing to its commitment to environmental awareness.

Mentors will be reaching out regularly with academic updates, please let them know what method of communication and time works best to be contacted at, to avoid unnecessary communication attempts.

Parent Square: HPS' primary communication tool designed to keep parents/guardians informed and involved in their children's learning and school activities. It is also the emergency communication system used to alert families about school closures or emergency situations. All parents/guardians will automatically receive messages to the email address they supplied to the school.

- Receive all school, classroom and group communication via email, text or app notification
- See important calendar events and RSVP
- See photos, links and attachments

Valuable Links for the VLI Learning Program	Links to VLI Forms
How to Log-in to VLI	Enrollment Forms Packet
How to Access Live Lessons/Recorded Videos	Transfer Request to/from VLI/In-Person
How to Access the Live Tutor Option	Enrollment Forms Packet

Returning Equipment and Withdrawals

All equipment from Hamtramck Public Schools needs to be returned upon graduation or withdrawal. Contact your teacher to schedule pickup for your returns. You are required to notify Hamtramck Public Schools as soon as possible if you plan on enrolling in another school so you are not reported to the state for non-attendance. Students under 18 years of age must have parent/guardian contact.



Semester 1	Semester 2
<p>Sep 01 – Labor Day, No School</p> <p>Sep 02 – First day for all students grades K-12 ½ Day of School AM/Staff PD PM</p> <p>Sep 15 – First day of Preschool ½ Day for Preschool</p> <p>Sep 16 – ½ Day for Preschool</p> <p>Sep 26 – No School for students/Full Day All Staff PD</p> <p>Oct 01 – Fall Count Day</p> <p>Oct 03 – End of Progress Report Period 1</p> <p>Oct 06 –Grading Window Closed</p> <p>Oct 09-Progress Report #1 Distributed at PT Conferences HHS/Horizon</p> <p>Oct 09 – ½ Day for Horizon, HHS/PT Conferences 12:30-3:00 & 5:00-7:00 HHS/Horizon</p> <p>Oct 10 –½ Day for All Students AM/Staff-Building Level PLC</p> <p>Oct 31 – ½ Day for All Students/HOZ – Final Exams/Records Day End of Q1</p> <p>Nov 03 – Grading window closed</p> <p>Nov 04 – No School for students/Full Day All Staff PD 8:00-3:00 (WRCC)</p> <p>Nov 05-After school PLC for Staff</p> <p>Nov 12 – Report Card 1 distributed</p> <p>Nov 13-½ Day for KMS,ECE,Holbrook, DE, DW & TB Students PT Conferences 12:30-3:00 & 5:00-7:00</p> <p>Nov 14-½ Day for All Students AM/Staff-Building Level PLC</p> <p>Nov 26 -Nov 28 – No school for students and staff Thanksgiving Break</p> <p>Dec 01-Students and Staff Return</p> <p>Dec 05 – End of Progress Report Period 2</p> <p>Dec 08 – Grading Window Closed - Progress Report Period 2</p> <p>Dec 11 – Progress Report 2 Distributed</p> <p>Dec 22-Jan 2 – No school for students and staff Winter Break (WRCC)</p> <p>Jan 05 – Students and staff return</p> <p>Jan 19 – No school for students and staff Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</p> <p>Jan 21 – HHS, Horizon & KMS Semester Exams, ½ Day for HHS & KMS Records Day PM for HHS & KMS</p> <p>Jan 22 – HHS, Horizon & KMS Semester Exams, ½ Day for HHS & KMS, Records Day PM for HHS & KMS</p>	<p>Jan 26 – Quarter 3, Semester 2 starts</p> <p>Jan 28- Report Card 2 Distributed</p> <p>Feb 11 – Supplemental Count Day</p> <p>Feb 13– No School for Students/Staff PD All Day</p> <p>Feb 16 – No school for students and staff, President’s Day (WRCC)</p> <p>Mar 06 – End of Progress Report Period 3</p> <p>Mar 09 – Grading window closed</p> <p>March 12- Progress Report #3 Distributed at PT Conferences</p> <p>March 12- ½ Day for All Students PT Conferences 12:30-3:00 & 5:00-7:00</p> <p>Mar 13 –½ Day for All students AM/Staff-Building Level PLC PM</p> <p>March 19- No School for Students/Staff Eid al-Fitr</p> <p>March 20- No School for Students/Staff Eid al-Fitr</p> <p>March 27- No School for Students/All Day Staff PD</p> <p>Mar 30-April 3 – No school for students and staff, Spring Break & Good Friday (WRCC)</p> <p>Apr 06 – Students Return</p> <p>Apr 10 – End of 3rd Quarter</p> <p>Apr 13- Grading Window Closed</p> <p>Apr 16 – Report Card 3 distributed</p> <p>Apr 24- ½ Day for All Students AM/Staff-Building PLC</p> <p>May 06- After School PLC for Staff</p> <p>May 08- ½ Day for students AM/Staff-Building Level PLC PM</p> <p>May 08 – End of Progress Report Period 4</p> <p>May 11 – Grading window closed - Progress Report Period 4</p> <p>May 14- Progress Report 4 Distributed</p> <p>May 15- No School for Students/Staff PD All Day</p> <p>May 22 – ½ Day for students and staff/Seniors Last Day</p> <p>May 25 – No school for students and staff, Memorial Day</p> <p>May 26- No School for students and staff, Eid al-Adha</p> <p>May 27- No School for students and staff, Eid al-Adha</p> <p>June 1 – Last day for Preschool</p> <p>June 5 – HHS/HOZ Graduation, 6:00 PM</p> <p>June 10-½ Day for all students (HHS, HOZ & KMS Semester Exams) Records Day PM all schools</p> <p>June 11 – ½ Day for all students (HHS, HOZ & KMS Semester Exams) Records Day PM all schools</p>



<p>Jan 23 – ½ Day All Students/Records Day for All Staff PM (HHS, HOZ & KMS Semester Exams) Jan 23 – End of 2nd Quarter & 1st Semester Jan 26 – Grading window closed</p>	<p>June 12 – ½ Day for all students (HHS, HOZ & KMS Semester Exams) Records Day PM all schools June 12 – Last day for all students- June 12- End of 4th Quarter & 2nd Semester June 15 – Grading window closed for ALL schools June 17 – Final report cards mailed</p>
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Virtual Learning Institute

HHS – Hamtramck High School, KMS – Kosciuszko Middle School, ELE – Elementary (HOB, TBS, DE, DW, ECE), HOZ – Horizon High School
WRCC=Wayne RESA Common Calendar 2023-2024 School Calendar—*District calendar dates are subject to change: Floater days (EID to be determined by a

