

# ST. JOHNS VIRTUAL SCHOOL



*Creating a New Tradition in Education*

## 2017-2018 Student & Parent Handbook

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### **Vision**

The vision of SJVS is to be leaders in innovative teaching through online and blended learning programs that use best practices to promote academic excellence in a student-centered environment while serving the District of St. Johns County.

### **Mission**

Our Mission is to ensure all students are provided with an academically rich and rigorous education through online learning opportunities that meet the needs of today's diverse learners.

## **Overview**

In a full-time virtual instruction program, students are home each day accessing their curriculum and instruction via the internet. Off line activities and instructional materials may also be provided depending on the grade level of the student and each individual course of enrollment. Elementary students work with the assistance of a parent or guardian who serves as the learning coach and their learning is facilitated, monitored, and assessed by their teacher(s) who interact with students via the internet, email, phone, web conferencing, texting, and instant messaging. Although families will have some flexibility in scheduling within the day, students are expected to work each school day, in each assigned class according to their pacing chart or learning plan. Students must maintain minimum pace expectations and demonstrate mastery on individual assignments to be successful.

Students will be required to participate in both synchronous and asynchronous activities. Synchronous activities are those that are held in real time, online or face to face, and are time certain. Select sessions will be mandatory as they will fulfill attendance requirements, provide essential instruction, or meet state/district assessment requirements. Students and/or families are expected to attend all mandatory synchronous activities unless excused by their teacher. Families will be provided with these schedules and are expected to make the necessary arrangements for participation. Asynchronous activities are those that students can complete during the day. These activities will be facilitated and scheduled by the learning coach, but are expected to be completed by established deadlines.

Participation in a full time virtual instruction program is a commitment by the student and the entire family. Although students are working from home, the overall time spent engaged in school activities is similar to that in a traditional school environment. Elementary students will spend approximately five hours per day, five days a week. Secondary students will spend between 6-7 hours per day, five days per week on their school work. Virtual learning is a significant departure from traditional schooling and should be considered carefully by all before enrolling in the program.

## **What is SJVS?**

St. Johns Virtual School is an online school of choice offered by the St. Johns County School District for grades k-12. We offer part time and full time enrollment.

## **What type of student would thrive in an online environment?**

Students must be self-disciplined in their work habits, enjoy academic rigor, and have a growth mindset.

## **Part Time Options**

Students are able to take SJVS courses during the school day in a lab at their school of attendance or after school as an additional course. If you are looking to have your student take a SJVS course during the school day, please work with your child's school counselor for placement.

**Full Time Options**

St. Johns Virtual School is a district school of choice meaning students must apply and be accepted. Acceptance is based on prior student grades, test scores, and student attendance.

The rationale for our selective process is based on the premise that if a student is not successful in the Full Time program due to its rigor or independent learning environment and chooses to withdraw, a student can severely disrupt their graduation timeline.

Enrollment windows will open in April of each year. A second enrollment window, for second semester, will open in late November/early December.

St. Johns Virtual School Offers 3 provider options:

	Grades K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
St. Johns Virtual School	X	X	X
K12, Inc.	X	X	X
Florida Virtual School	X	X	X
Connexus	X		

**Questions and Answers**

**How is SJVS different from the Florida Virtual School (FLVS)?**

SJVS is a franchise of FLVS. We use their curriculum, but instruction is provided by St. Johns County teachers.

**Is SJVS available to students year round?**

No. Students after Survey 3, who will not be able to complete the course prior to the end of the school year, will be directed to Florida Virtual School. The following courses are examples of courses that may be available past Survey 3 date (February 9<sup>th</sup>) ; **HOPE, Driver’s Ed, Peer Counseling 1, and Social Media**. Please check the SJVS website for available updates.

**Can my SJVS student still participate in public school sports?** Yes. SJVS students are eligible to participate in sports at their zoned public school. You must notify the school of your intention to participate in sports BEFORE the beginning of the athletic season in which you wish to participate.

**Can I participate in other activities at the public school like clubs, band, etc?** Maybe. If you are registered as an SJVS student with the district, you may submit a request in writing to the principal of your zoned school requesting permission to participate in an activity at that school.

**Can I monitor my student’s progress online?**

St. Johns Virtual requires all parents to open and maintain a guardian account. Through this effective communication tool, parents will know almost as much as the teacher about their student’s progress.

**How do I sign up for St. Johns Virtual if my student is currently in FLVS?** Your student should complete the current course in which he or she is enrolled and then when the time comes to select a new course,

simply visit the SJVS website to complete the application process.

**Is there any counseling on course requirements available to St. Johns Virtual students?** Yes, we are staffed with our own school counselor. We encourage you to make an appointment with us so we can "begin with the end in mind".

**Can students receive a high school diploma through St. Johns Virtual?** Yes, eligible students who enter our full-time accredited virtual instruction program can receive a diploma from a St. Johns County School if they complete all graduation requirements.

**Can my student be enrolled part-time in St. Johns Virtual and part-time in regular high school?** Yes, if a student makes these arrangements with the zoned public school before the beginning of the school year and receives approval from the administration of their zoned public school.

### **Teachers**

Each SJVS teacher is highly qualified in the subject areas and grade levels they teach. All teachers hold valid Florida certification and have completed all necessary fingerprinting and background checks. Each teacher is available to students via email, phone, or text Monday through Friday.

### **Courses**

Student courses will be selected with support from the SJVS School Counselor. While direct instruction is available, families create their own schedules (time of day and day of week) based on the pace chart for each course. SJVS Full Time students are public school students and must take a full course load of 6 courses.

### **Special Note Concerning Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Program Services**

St. Johns County School District is pleased to offer St. Johns Virtual Instruction Programs as a -"parental choice"- option. Some accommodations and supplemental services for students in an ESE (Exceptional Student Education) program can be provided in conjunction with the district's virtual instruction program; however, direct specialized instruction or modifications to the curriculum are not available.

**Exceptional Student Education/Section 504/ADA:** Prior to enrollment as a full-time student, an IEP/504 accommodation plan review will be scheduled to determine if the virtual environment is appropriate for the individual student. As in traditional public schools, not all ESE services are available at every school. Therefore, the review team will determine the location of services, should they be required for the student.

The IEP team may determine the need for additional services beyond those provided in the virtual instruction program. Depending on the nature and extent of those additional services, these exceptional students may be able to participate in one of St. Johns virtual instruction programs and also receive some ESE services, such as therapies and related services. Transportation to the zoned school for therapies and related services will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

## **Testing Expectations**

- SJVS Middle and High School students **must have their SJVS segment/semester exams proctored** unless they are in an End of Course exam course (Biology, Civics, Geometry, Algebra 1 & 2, US History). Proctoring can occur at their zoned school or at the SJVS office. Please call Jo Linskey at (904) 547-8090 to make an appointment at the SJVS offices.
- **SJVS Part Time students** who are taking an online course with a **required state assessment or End of Course (EOC) exam** will be tested at their district school of enrollment.
- **Full Time SJVS students (K-12) are required to take all state assessments at the SJVS office.**

## **Family Responsibilities**

- Online learning is a family decision. Each full time student is required to maintain a minimum of 6 courses per semester and maintain adequate weekly progress to be considered a full time student. Progress is defined as 6% completion per class, per week. Students who fall behind will be required to complete school work at the SJVS office until they reach and maintain proper pace. Making sure your child is successful in an online environment requires a consistent support structure.
- Full Time SJVS Students must take a full course load of 6 courses each semester.
- Students are to follow the pace chart of each course at all times.
  - Failure to follow an appropriate pace may lead to a student being withdrawn from the course.
- Students must return all teacher communication in a timely manner and initiate communication when necessary.
- Students must learn to be independent, self-directed learners.
- Notes in a virtual setting are a must! Students should be taking detailed notes for each course. Notes can be used on Discussion Based Assessments and other assignments. Detailed notes increase student efficiency, confidence, and reduce anxiety. Students may not use notes copied directly from the course or the internet. **Student created notes, either hand written or typed, are the only notes permitted.**
- All submitted assignments must be 100% authentic to the student of record.
- Monitor your Grace Period. The Grace Period is the **first 21 days** of the course after activation. Withdrawing from the Grace Period allow the student to withdraw with no academic penalty. Students who withdraw after the **21 day Grace Period** will receive a designation that could negatively impact the transcript.
- Parent involvement is critical to a child's online success. Guardian accounts, which allow parents/guardians to monitor their child's progress are available on the FLVS.net website. Simply select Parent/Guardian account from the Quick Links tab.
- Update student profile and inform teachers of contact changes (email, phone number, etc.)

## **Teacher Responsibilities**

- Monthly communication via the families' preferred method of communication (text, phone or email)
- Grading returned with feedback within 48-72 hours.
- Office hours or direct instruction via Blackboard Collaborate. Dates and times are posted on the teacher's Announcement Page.
- Parent/student communication within 24 hours.
- Teachers will confirm your student's final grade prior to submitting it in Virtual School Administrator. If a teacher cannot reach you, they will leave a message stating that the grade will be issued within 48 hours.

## **School Counselor Responsibilities**

- Approve course requests.
- Communicate with students and families the expectations of SJVS.
- Place students according to student strength.
- Monitor Progress – Each Monday, Guidance Counselors, Lab Facilitators, and Administrators will receive a report with data for your students taking virtual courses.
- Monitor the 21 day grace period for student progress.

## **Policies**

**Students must be able to maintain pace and show academic success in order to remain active in the course.**

### **14 Day Minimum**

Students must actively participate in each semester course for a minimum of 14 days. The 14 days starts with the first assignment submitted and ends with the last assignment submitted. Physical Education courses that require an exercise journal require a 21 minimum. Students who complete earlier than the required minimum will not receive credit for the course.

### **21 day grace period**

If students are not successful in their first 3 weeks, it is a significant indicator that the student will not be likely to complete the course. It is important that all parties monitor the grace period very closely. If you believe it would be best to withdraw from the course, communicate your concerns with your teacher prior to the expiration of the grace period. Students who exceed the grace period will receive a Withdraw Failing (WF) on their transcript if they do not complete the course. Students who are withdrawn during the grace period receive a Withdrawal (W).

## **Academic Integrity**

Academic Integrity is critical in an online environment. Each piece of work submitted by students must be 100% original work. Plagiarism, to use the work of others as your own, and Cheating, violation of school rules stating all work must be 100% original, will lead to consequences ranging from a grade reduction to removal from the course with a failing grade. Our program uses Discussion Based Assessments, Turnitin.com, and proctored exams to guarantee the authenticity of student work.

**SJVS uses a mastery model, meaning students can resubmit assignments until they have achieved mastery of the course concepts. There is no need to cheat. Take your time, do your due diligence, and follow the feedback from your teachers for success.**

- Plagiarism – Student who represents work that has been copied or pasted from a published Internet resource such as, but not limited to, Wikipedia or any source without the proper credit.
- Cheating – Student who represents any other person’s work or work from any source including hard drives, software, or answer banks (such as, but not limited to Yahoo! Answers, Craigslist, translator services, etc.) as their own. Examples include inappropriate email soliciting emails, documented inappropriate email soliciting answers, documented inappropriate discussions, student to student cheating, and cheating in a lab classroom.
- **First Offense** – learning intervention, parent contact by teacher or administrator, re-creation of the assignment for a reduced percentage.
- **Second Offense** – first offense consequences **plus** an automatic zero for the assignment, possible failing grade for the segment, possible removal from St. Johns Virtual School, and possible removal of completed course grade if Academic Integrity issue is determined retroactively.
- **Third Offense** – Student is withdrawn with a failing grade, student may lose the privilege to enroll in additional St. Johns Virtual courses.

## Attendance

**State legislation requires virtual students to participate in a daily attendance plan. Student attendance will be measured against the student’s progress in the course in comparison to the course pace chart. Students are to average a minimum of 6% complete per course per week.**

<b>Week of the Year</b>	<b>Week Number</b>	<b>% Complete</b>	<b>Week of the Year</b>	<b>Week Number</b>	<b>% Complete</b>
Aug. 14	Week 1	6%	Jan. 8th	Week 1	6%
Aug. 21	Week 2	12%	Jan. 15th	Week 2	12%
Aug. 28	Week 3	18%	Jan. 22nd	Week 3	18%
Sept. 4th	Week 4	24%	Jan. 29th	Week 4	24%
Sept. 11th	Hurricane Week		Feb. 5th	Week 5	30%
Sept. 18th	Week 5	30%	Feb. 12th	Week 6	36%
Sept 25th	Week 6	36%	Feb. 19th	Week 7	42%
Oct. 2nd	Week 7	42%	Feb. 26th	Week 8	48%
Oct. 9th	Week 8	48%	March 5th	Week 9	54%
Oct. 16th	Week 9	54%	March 12th	Week 10	60%
Oct. 23rd	Week 10	60%	March 19th	Week 11	66%
Oct. 30th	Week 11	66%	March 26th	Spring Break	
Nov. 6th	Week 12	72%	April 2nd	Week 13	72%
Nov. 13th	Week 13	78%	April 9th	Week 14	78%
Nov. 20th	Thanksgiving Break		April 16th	Week 15	84%
Nov. 28th	Week 14	84%	April 23rd	Week 16	90%
Dec. 4th	Exams	90%	April 30th	Exams	96%
Dec. 18th	Exams	100%	May 7th	Exams	100%

**Students who do not keep the appropriate pace will be considered truant and fall under St. Johns County School District truancy policies.**

**The student’s work week starts on Monday morning and ends each week on Sunday at 11:59.**

## Communication

Teachers have 24 hours to return phone calls, emails, or text messages. If your child is “stuck” please encourage your child to move to another course or work around the issue until the teacher returns your communication.

## Contact Instructor

Students who are not on pace or behind in communication will be placed in Contact Instructor Status, meaning they are temporarily suspended from the course until communication is reestablished.



### **Discussion Based Assessments (DBAs)**

DBAs are an opportunity for teachers and students to talk over the phone to discuss the concepts of the course. DBAs are found in every module which will require the teacher and student to communicate live a minimum of 4 times per segment/semester. They serve as another level of teacher/student accountability and are nonnegotiable as they are an integral part of program. Students must complete and pass all DBAs in order to proceed in the course. All DBAs must occur live over the phone or program similar to Blackboard Collaborate. Students who skip DBAs will be suspended from the course until the necessary DBA has been completed.

### **Drop Policy**

In the event that a full time or part time student does not meet the deadlines for submitting assignments, SJVS will adhere to the SJVS Drop Policy

1. No work for 1 week – Documented Teacher Phone Call + success plan
2. No work 2 weeks – Documented Phone Call and WD

If a student would like to be reinstated in the course, they must call the Program Coordinator (904) 547-8086 to schedule an appointment.

### **Enrollment**

Check SJVS website for SJVS courses available after **Survey 3 (February 9<sup>th</sup>)**. All other enrollments may be sent to FLVS. Students can still enroll for an August start date with SJVS.

### **Graduation**

Students who earn enough credits for graduation are welcome to participate in the St. Johns Virtual School graduation ceremony. It is the expectation that all seniors will finish the courses, with final exams completed, two weeks prior to the graduation date. Seniors who do not complete their credits may be able to receive their diploma at a later date.

### **Issuing Grades**

Teachers will confirm the final grade with families prior to submitting in Virtual School Administrator. If the teacher cannot reach a family, they will leave a message stating that the grade will be issued in 48 hours.

Issued grades will not be reopened once the grade has been submitted.

### **Mastery Model**

Teacher feedback will provide constructive criticism with the intent that the feedback will help your child learn from the areas in need of improvement.

Students may resubmit assignments once they have made improvements to their work. Assignments have a maximum of 3 resubmissions.

Semester/Segment exams may not be retaken.

## **Promotion**

Promotion to the next grade level is based on the completion of academic requirements and is an SJVS administrative decision.

## **Registration**

SJVS hosts 2 enrollment periods each year starting in April for the first semester and closing in July. The enrollment window for the second semester opens in late November and closes in early January.

All students must apply via the St. Johns Virtual School website and be accepted into the program.

Students who are not accepted may decide to homeschool their child while using SVJS courses as their curriculum. Students who can prove that they can be successful in an online environment can then reapply.

## **Schedule Change Policy**

For Full time SJVS students, a change may be granted under the following conditions:

- The course has already been taken;
- The student does not meet the prerequisite(s) for the course;
- The student is a senior in need of a specific course for graduation;
- The change is a result of a staffing recommendation;

Part time students must receive permission from the administration of their locally zoned school for a schedule change to be considered.

## **Seniors**

Full Time SJVS does not accept second semester seniors.

**Part time seniors must have enough time to complete a semester/segment according to the 14-day segment minimum. Physical Education courses have a 21-24 day minimum requirements for semester/segments.**

All academic integrity issues must be investigated through FLVS. Investigations may take several days or weeks depending upon the severity and may prevent students from missing important deadlines (graduation)!

**Senior course request after survey 3 (February 9<sup>th</sup>) may be sent to FLVS. Course waitlists may occur. Please plan accordingly.**

## **Technology**

To be successful in the program, students must have daily, dedicated access to a computer, monitor, and the internet. Families of full-time students who do not have this technology in the home may be

eligible to receive assistance. Proof of need will be established through the Free and Reduced lunch reporting system. Potentially eligible families need to contact the St. Johns County School District Food Services Department for the appropriate application.

**Truancy**

District truancy policies will be applicable to all SJVS students who do not keep pace with course pace charts.

**St. Johns Virtual School Full Time**

Student applies for SJVS Full Time Program on SJVS Website during enrollment window

1<sup>st</sup> Semester (April - July )

2<sup>nd</sup> Semester (Late Nov – Early Jan )

Family meets with a SJVS Counselor to discuss expectations. If all parties agree the program is right for the student’s success, the child is registered for courses.

Student’s progress is monitored weekly by teachers, administration, and counselor. If the student is not making adequate progress or achieving academic success, the student will return to their zoned school.

The family is informed that the student has not been accepted into the program. Student is given the option to enroll as a Homeschool student and if desired, use virtual courses for their curriculum. If proven successful with virtual courses, the family can reapply for the FT program

