



*Home of the Rams*

2020-2021 Student Handbook

**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.

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## **Overview**

In a full-time virtual instruction program, students are home each day accessing their curriculum and instruction via the internet. Offline 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 have flexibility in scheduling their student's studies within the day, students must 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, such as monthly homeroom meetings, will be mandatory as they will fulfill attendance requirements, provide essential instruction, or meet state/district assessment requirements. Students and/or families must 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 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 schoolwork. Virtual learning is a significant departure from traditional schooling and should be considered carefully by all before enrolling in the program.

## **About 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 with multiple curriculum providers for families to choose from.

<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>Grades K-5</b>	<b>Grades 6-8</b>	<b>Grades 9-12</b>
Apex Learning		X	X
K12, Inc.	X	X	X
Florida Virtual School	X	X	X

### **Part Time Enrollment**

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

### **Full Time Enrollment**

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

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 or promotion timeline.

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

### **Questions and Answers**

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

FLVS is one of the curriculum providers that SJVS utilizes. Additionally, we utilize other curriculum providers such as Apex and K12.

Students who take FLVS courses through FLVS utilize FLVS teachers which are located throughout the state. By enrolling in your courses through SJVS utilizing the FLVS curriculum, instruction is provided by St. Johns County teachers. Families also receive support from a local St. Johns County administration, staff, and school counselor. We monitor student progress to facilitate success. SJVS students also have the advantage of being able to work with their teachers face to face on Academic Days which are hosted on the SJVS campus.

#### **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.

#### **Is SJVS available to students in the summer?**

Students who enroll after the February Deadline, and will not be able to complete the course prior to the end of the school year, will be directed to use SJVS with Apex Learning curriculum or enroll directly with the Florida Virtual School. There are a few courses which may be available for SJVS enrollment after the February deadline such as 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 prior to the beginning of the athletic season and tryouts for the sport in which you wish to participate.

**Can I participate in other activities at the public school like clubs, band, etc.?**

If you are registered as an SJVS student and in good academic standing, you may submit a request in writing to the principal of your zoned school requesting permission to participate in an activity at that school. Permission to participate is based on the discretion of the principal at the zoned school.

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

St. Johns Virtual requires all parents to have access to their child's progress either as a coach in Apex Learning or through a Guardian Account with FLVS. Through these effective communication tools, parents will know almost as much as the teacher about their student's progress.

Please follow the link to set up or edit your parent account in the FLVS system:

<https://stjohnsvirtual.com/flvs-parent-account-info/>

**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. The counselor provides college/ career advising, social- emotional support and will manage your student's customized academic path.

**Can students receive a high school diploma through St. Johns Virtual?**

Yes, eligible students who enter our full-time accredited virtual instruction program will receive a diploma from a St. Johns Virtual School upon completion of all graduation requirements.

**Can a student be enrolled in both SJVS and a traditional 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.

A student enrolled in 4 virtual courses and up to 2 courses at the zoned school is classified as a full-time virtual student. A student enrolled at their zoned school and taking up to 2 virtual courses is classified as a full-time student at their zoned school.

**Can a full-time SJVS student take an extra course(s)?**

This will be a case-by-case situation for students in middle and high school. Elementary this is not an option. The general rule is that a student must be completed with all their current classes before requesting to start another course and must align with their educational needs.

### **General Information**

**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 from 8am until 3:30pm. Teachers respond to communications within 24 hours (except during weekends or holidays). Please visit the teacher's web page on the SJVS website: [www.stjohnsvirtual.com](http://www.stjohnsvirtual.com) for contact information, live lesson schedules, and student resources.

**Courses**

Courses for full time students will be selected with support from the SJVS School Counselor. While direct instruction is available, families have the flexibility to determine the time of day that the student works on schoolwork. Students must work consistently and maintain a rate of completion in compliance with the pace chart for each course.

SJVS Full Time students are public school students and must take a full course load of 6 courses and all standardized tests. To meet attendance requirements, students must also submit each week's assignments for each course every Friday by 5:00 p.m.

### **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 at the current zoned school 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**

- Both full-time and part-time students in grades 6-12, must have their SJVS segment/semester exams proctored either at their zoned school or on the SJVS campus. Please visit [www.stjohnsvirtual.com](http://www.stjohnsvirtual.com) to make an appointment to test on the SJVS campus. Students who are enrolled in a state EOC course (Biology, Civics, Geometry, Algebra 1, US History) are exempt from on campus proctored exams in that course. SJVS Part-time students who are taking a virtual course with a required state assessment or End of Course (EOC) exam will be administered the appropriate EOC at their district school of enrollment.
- Full-time SJVS students (K-12) are required to take all state assessments at the SJVS office. Participation in the testing process, on the assigned dates/ times designated by SJVS, is necessary to maintain continued full-time enrollment with SJVS.
- All segment exams are administered only once. There are no retakes on segment exams. Study accordingly.

### **Student Responsibilities**

- Online learning is a family decision. Each full-time student is required to maintain a minimum of 6 courses per semester and meet weekly progress expectations according to course pace charts to be considered a full-time student and comply with state attendance requirements. Meeting attendance requirements can be determined by comparing your child's weekly progress with the pace dictated on the corresponding pace chart. Ensuring that you're sure your child is successful in an online environment requires a consistent support structure.
- Each course pace chart can be found in the student's Homeroom Digital Notebook:
  - In order to meet state attendance requirements, avoid truancy, or the accumulation of absences, all weekly assignments are due each Friday by 5:00 p.m.
  - Each week, parents and students must initial each course Signature Page indicating that the student has met his/her weekly attendance by completing the weekly assignments for each course.
  - Failure to follow an appropriate pace may lead to a student being withdrawn from the Full Time Program.
- Students must return all teacher communication in a timely manner and initiate communication when necessary.
- Students must learn to be independent, self-directed learners.
- Good notetaking skills are essential for virtual success. Students should be taking detailed notes for each course. Notes can be used on Content Checks (formerly DBAs), module exams, segment exams, and other assignments. Detailed notes increase student efficiency, confidence, and reduce anxiety. **Student created notes, either handwritten or typed, are the only notes permitted.** Students **may not** use notes copied directly from the course or the internet.
- All submitted assignments must be 100% authentic to the student of record.
- Parent involvement is critical to a child's online success. St. Johns Virtual requires all parents to have access to their child's progress either as a coach in Apex Learning or through a Guardian Account with FLVS. Through these effective communication tools, parents will know almost as much as the teacher about their student's progress.
- Update student profile and inform teachers of contact changes (email, phone number, etc.).

## **Teacher Responsibilities**

- Homeroom teachers conduct monthly communication for their homeroom students and provide updates for each enrolled course.
- Individualized monthly communication via the families' preferred method of communication (text, phone or email)
- Live lessons
- Grading returned with feedback within 48 business 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 a student's final grade prior to finalizing it.
- Participation in Academic Days.

## Policies

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

### Academic Days

SJVS conducts Academic Days in which students are invited to work on campus and have face to face interaction with teachers. At least one teacher from each of each content area is on campus to assist students from 9:00 – 12:00. Students may sign in at the front office as early as 8:30am. Academic Days are an option available to all full-time students. Academic Day attendance is mandatory for any students who are behind in one or more courses. Academic Days will be held virtually this year due to COVID-19.

### Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is critical in an online environment. Each piece of work submitted by students must be 100% original work. Plagiarism and cheating will lead to consequences ranging from a grade reduction to removal from the course with a failing grade. Our program uses Unit Standards Checks, 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. Cheating will not be tolerated. Students are encouraged to manage their time, do due diligence, and follow the teacher's instructions for success.

- **Plagiarism** – Representing 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** – Representing 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, 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 (Highest grade available is a 50%)
- **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 loses the privilege to enroll in additional St. Johns Virtual courses.

### **Add/Drop Policy**

Students assigned to a class have full course access to the curriculum, therefore students may not drop from a course or change content status (Standard/Honors) after the **10<sup>th</sup> day** of course access. Prior to the start of semester 2, students may change course content status (Standard/ Honors) for the upcoming semester. However, no course content status changes will ever be made for EOC courses (Civics, Algebra 1, Geometry, Biology, US History).

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

1. No work submitted during 1<sup>st</sup> week of course access – Documented Teacher Phone Call + success plan
2. No work submitted during 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> week of course access – Documented Phone Call and WD from course and/ or full-time virtual program.
3. If a student wishes to be reinstated in a course, they must contact the Assistant Principal for approval.

### **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. The student's workweek starts on Monday morning and ends each week on Friday at 5:00 p.m. All work for the week is due on Friday at 5:00 p.m. Students who elect to work on the weekend are working for the week ahead not for the week prior. Students who do not keep the appropriate pace will be considered truant and fall under St. Johns County School District truancy policies.

### **SJVS Pacing Can be Found Here:**

<https://stjohnsvirtual.com/full-time-sjvs-pacing/>

### **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 who are not responding to communication will be temporarily suspended from the course until communication is reestablished.

### **Course Minimums**

- **FLVS Curriculum:** 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 or 24-day minimum. Students who complete earlier than the required minimum will not receive credit for the course.



- Apex Curriculum: Students must actively participate in each semester for a minimum of 30 hours.

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

DBA's are an opportunity for teachers and students to discuss the concepts of the course. DBA's are found in every module which will require the teacher and student to communicate live a minimum of 4 times per segment/semester. The DBA's 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 DBA's in order to proceed in the course. All DBA's must occur in person, live over the phone or via a program like Zoom. Students who skip DBA's will be suspended from the course until the necessary discussion has been completed.

### **Dress Code**

All students are expected to follow the district dress code guidelines. If you do not know these please go to our website and under the Student Code of Conduct. You will see the district guidelines on pages 14-15. If your student is out of dress code, they could be sent straight home.

[SJCS D 2020-2021 Student Code of Conduct](#)

### **Enrollment**

Check SJVS website for SJVS courses available after February deadline. Enrollments can continue with St. Johns County teachers and Apex Learning curriculum or enrollments may be directed to FLVS for families seeking to use FLVS curriculum and FLVS instructors.

Students may enroll with an August start date with SJVS using any curriculum provider.

### **Grace Period**

**Part-time Virtual Students Only:** Monitor your Grace Period. The Grace Period is the **first 21 days** of the course after activation. If students are not successful in their first 3 weeks, it is a significant indicator that the student will not successfully complete the course. It is important that all parties monitor the grace period very closely. If you believe it is best to withdraw from the course, communicate your concerns with your teacher prior to the expiration of the grace period. Withdrawing during the Grace Period allows the student to withdraw with no academic penalty.

Students who withdraw after the **21-day Grace Period** will receive a grade designation that can negatively impact the transcript.

- WF- Withdrawn Failing- applicable to students who withdraw after the grace period.
- WP- Withdrawn Passing- applicable to students who withdraw after the grace period.
- W- Withdrawn- applicable to students who withdraw during the grace period.

**Full-time Virtual Students:** Full-time virtual students cannot be withdrawn from a course and must always maintain a full course load of 6 enrollments.

### 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 must finish their courses, with final exams completed, at least two weeks prior to the graduation date.

### Homerooms

Each full time and middle school student are provided a virtual homeroom. Homerooms meet in an online classroom once a quarter. Attendance and participation are optional. The purpose of homeroom is to increase communication, motivate learning, build peer relationships and maintain the expectations and responsibilities of being a full-time virtual school student. Students will maintain strong relationships with their content area teachers through support and instruction. However; homeroom teachers will serve as the primary point of contact for each student and provide a single monthly update for all courses.

To meet state attendance requirements, all weekly work for each course will be due by Friday at 5:00 p.m. Students who fall behind pace are subject to district truancy policies and removal from the SJVS full time program.

### Honors Courses

Students must earn a grade of 60% or higher on all assignments designated as Honors or Advanced. Students who do not earn at least a 60% on Honors assignments will not receive Honors/ Advanced credit and their course designation will be changed to Standard.

### Issuing Grades

Teachers will confirm the final grade with families prior to submitting the final grade. If a teacher cannot reach the student/ parent, they will send a communication stating that the final grade will be issued within 48 hours. **48 hours does not include holidays or weekends.** Issued grades will not be reopened once the final grade has been submitted.

### Mastery Model

Teacher feedback will provide constructive criticism with the intent that the instruction contained in 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. Once you take a segment exam, the class is finished. You may not have any assignments reset after the segment exam is started.**

### Mental Health

The SJVS school counselor can provide referrals to community resources and assist students with emotional or mental health issues. Please contact the school counselor for more information.

### Promotion

Promotion to the next grade level is based on the completion of academic requirements outlined in the St Johns County Student Progression Plan 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;

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

### **Segment Exam Policy**

All students must take their segment exams in a proctored setting. The only exemption would be home education students. Before sitting for your segment exam, you must complete all coursework and receive a clearance email before coming in. Students will not be cleared to test without first obtaining clearance from their teachers. There are no retakes for segment exams. Please come into the test fully prepared.

### **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 will be investigated. Investigations may take several days, or weeks depending upon the severity and may prevent students from missing important deadlines such as graduation.

Senior course request after the February deadline 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.

**Test Corrections & Retakes**

Students must present a copy of their student produced notes (written or typed) in order to participate in lesson resets, test corrections, or to retake a unit exam. **Segment exams cannot be retaken.**