

Elementary Virtual Acceleration Opportunities FAQ's

1. **How does new legislation affect my child?** Students scoring a level 4 or 5 on FCAT Reading or Math may be eligible to take middle school courses virtually or move up to the next grade level in a traditional classroom.

2. **Am I required to place my child in a virtual class?** No, the requirement is for the school to notify you of this opportunity. Your child will not be placed in a virtual course without your permission. In addition, the school administration must determine that acceleration is academically appropriate.

3. **Why must the administration determine that it is academically appropriate to accelerate my child?**

If your child is placed in a middle school virtual class, then he/she will not be enrolled in the same current grade-level course. As an example, consider a 5th grader who scored a level 4 or 5 on FCAT Math. The FCAT test identifies this student as a potential candidate for acceleration because he/she performed above grade level in 4th grade math standards. Before determining that this 5th grader should be placed in 6th grade math we must also determine that he/she has mastered the 5th grade math standards. If accelerated, this student would never receive direct instruction in the 5th grade standards and success in math is dependent on mastering the standards at each grade level. Therefore, the school must be certain that the student has achieved mastery at the previous grade level (FCAT) as well as in any grade level content that would be missed as a result of acceleration.

4. **My 4th grader scored a 4 or a 5 on the FCAT Reading and/or Math. Can I request acceleration into 5th grade virtual classes?** We would attempt to provide 5th grade instruction through a traditional classroom setting, but with the class size amendment, virtual classes may be the only option.

5. **If my child participates in this course(s), who will be the teacher?** If your student takes a course through St. Johns Virtual School, then the teacher will be employed by St. Johns Public Schools and is available locally via phone or email when needed. If taking a Florida Virtual School course, then the teacher is employed by Florida Virtual School. Each teacher will be state-certified, fingerprinted, and background checked required regardless of the employer.

6. **How will my child communicate with the teacher?** Students and parents will communicate regularly with the teacher primarily through email and phone. St. Johns Virtual teachers have office hours to meet with students in person.

7. **Will my child be able to accomplish all coursework at school?** Probably not. Most Middle School courses require a significant amount of time and "homework" that the student will need to accomplish to remain on pace in the course.

8. **What FCAT test will my student take if he/she is enrolled in an accelerated course?** Your student will take the FCAT tests that are required for his/her grade level. Although your student may be enrolled in a course for a higher grade level, he/she is still classified as an elementary student by grade level and therefore will take all of the FCAT assessments for the assigned grade level.

9. I see that courses are available through St. Johns Virtual School (SJVS) or Florida Virtual School (FLVS), what is the difference? SJVS is a franchise of FLVS. SJVS is the provider of first choice for virtual instruction however in situations in which SJVS cannot fulfill the need, students may qualify to access the services of FLVS. The significant difference is with the instructor and school calendar. SJVS teachers are employed by St. Johns Public Schools and coursework must be completed by the end of the school year. The deadline is a firm one and if a student has not completed a course by the last day of school, they will not pass the course.

10. How will promotion be impacted by enrollment in an accelerated course? The school must consider your child's performance in the online course(s) to determine promotion. Failure to complete a course or to receive a passing grade may have an impact on your student's promotion.

11. What if the student finds the course too difficult and wants to drop it after they have started? The student has 28 calendar days from the time of enrollment to drop the course without penalty. After that time, a grade of W/F (withdrew failing) will be assigned to the course and the student must make the course in elementary/middle school. The student will then return to the previously assigned on-grade-level class