

APPENDIX E

As a Franchise Instructor, I understand and agree to the FLVS Franchise Teaching Policies as outlined below.

FLVS Principles and Beliefs:

As at FLVS, franchise staff members are expected to follow the FLVS Principles and Beliefs.

FLVS Principles:

- The student is the driving force behind every decision we make.
- We never lose sight of the student and the individuals who support our students.
- We are an educational organization that maximizes learning in a non-traditional environment through the use of technology.
- Our primary measures of success are customer loyalty and student achievement.
- We operate as a visionary, entrepreneurial organization with minimal bureaucracy.
- Integrity and trust are at the heart of the organization.
- We plan ahead for the future rather than becoming comfortable with the present.
- Outstanding individuals make up an outstanding team; teamwork is at the root of our success.
- FLVS is an organization devoted to providing an empowering environment for educators to balance their personal and professional lives, while optimizing their professional growth.

FLVS Core Beliefs:

- that learning occurs through the development and delivery of dynamic, engaging, and transdisciplinary curricula;
- that students learn best through actively participating and applying knowledge to relevant situations and issues;
- that students learn best when they, their instructors, family, peers, and community members interact as facilitators of learning and share responsibility for student success;
- that instruction should accommodate students' varied learning styles and intelligence types to assist and encourage the path and pace by which they learn best;
- that students must be provided with appropriate support services that link academic, personal, social, and career goals;
- that assessment should measure student knowledge, guide student development, and allow meaningful evaluation of the processes as well as the products of education.

Florida Virtual School and its franchises provide innovative educational opportunities, breaking the mold of traditional education. Educators involved in creating this "out of the box" learning environment exhibit extraordinary dedication to the success of students. Because of the uniqueness of our school and work environment, Florida Virtual School and its franchises do not follow all of the traditional educational norms and practices. Our virtual learning environment requires staff to change the way they do what they have always done. No bells ring; instead students choose the time convenient for them to "attend class." This necessitates that our staff be available to meet the unique scheduling needs of our students, many of whom will be working in their courses during non-traditional hours. Staff members support our students and parents by fulfilling many roles such as being motivators, mentors, and facilitators, all in the effort to ensure student learning and success. Only with the dedicated efforts of all staff will Florida Virtual School and its franchises reach the goal of providing the highest quality learning environment to students. To serve our virtual students effectively, the staff must affirm the *FLVS Beliefs*. To develop the highest quality virtual learning environment that the 21st century students deserve and need, we, as a staff, must share the FLVS vision and embrace the FLVS philosophy and expectations.

FLVS Franchise Teaching Policies

Communication and interaction is at the heart of our success. Research continues to show that student-teacher interaction is the key to a successful educational experience. Frequent student-teacher communication in the virtual learning environment requires commitment above and beyond the traditional work day by staff, as communication is the critical element to the success of the program. Florida Virtual School's evaluation consistently shows overwhelming need and appreciation for the frequent communication that is occurring between staff and students. Voice to voice communication and email are considered essential and are expected on a regular basis. Instructional Support personnel are required to alert their immediate supervisor of their availability on days in which they will be traveling or away from their regular work location.

General Communications Expectations

- All email and voicemail communication should be responded to within 24 hours during the work week. Weekend communication should be handled with the highest integrity and professional judgment.
- All instructional staff (full-time and adjuncts) are expected to have a publishable business telephone line. This phone must be answered in a professional manner ("This is Tracy Teacher speaking, how may I help you?") at all times, either in person or by an answering device ("Hi, you've reached Tracy Teacher of Florida Virtual School. I cannot take your call right now, but please leave your name, number and message, and I will return your call within 2 hours.") Your home phone line may not be used as your business line unless you can guarantee that it is answered as above.
- All instructional staff (full-time and adjuncts) are expected to have access to a fax machine or efax account that allows retrieval of faxes on a daily basis.
- All staff are expected to be immediately available to students, parents, and/or colleagues either by pager, cell phone, or telephone until a minimum of 8:00pm on the days that respective staff member has identified as a work day. As a means for providing good customer service to our students and parents, instructional staff should alert students to their weekly schedule and check their voicemail and email at least once on "off-days" just to confirm that no emergencies exist. Arranging for a colleague to check is acceptable.
- Teachers are expected to talk personally with each student once a month and the student's parent/guardian once a month.
- Teachers are expected to update course announcement pages frequently.
- If there is a problem with a student at a school, the school guidance counselor should be contacted.
- If a student is not performing, the teacher is expected to follow the communication procedures in our "no contact" policy.

Student Drop Policy

Only through continuous communication can students be successful in an online course. Within each course the instructor outlines the weekly minimum work requirements. It is essential that the student and instructor maintain regular contact.

All students are required to sign the following statement upon registration:

I acknowledge that during the first **28 days** of being activated into my FLVS course I may drop the course without penalty. I understand that for each online course there are a minimum number of assignments that must be completed each week. Failure to submit the minimum

number of assignments on a weekly basis will result in my removal from the course and may result in a failing grade being assigned to my academic transcript. If I drop the course after completing 50% of the class requirements and fail to take the final exam, Florida Virtual School may issue an "F" for my final grade.

To ensure that our students are aware of this commitment, the processes below will be followed.

During the grace period, if you notice that a student is not progressing as they should, there are few things you must do prior to removing the student from the course.

1. Contact the student by phone to alert them that they are not making appropriate progress and explain the consequences if such behavior continues once the grace period expires.
2. Contact the parent about the concerns.
3. Log the contacts in VSA.
4. Withdraw the student through VSA. This is accomplished by filtering to the "Contact View", and selecting "Change Status" in the "Contact Action" column. This will take you to the "Change Status Request" form, select "Withdrawal" from the drop-down, indicate reason in box provided, and click "Submit".

If the teacher initiates dropping students **after the grace period has expired**, Call is made to the student prior to a No Contact Letter and then a No Contact Phone Call must be made, at minimum, be processed. The following steps should be taken in sequence:

Only through continuous communication can students be successful in an online course. Within each course the instructor outlines the weekly minimum work requirements. It is essential that the student and instructor maintain regular contact. To ensure that our students are aware of this commitment, the four-part process below will be followed:

1. If the student does not submit the expected number of assignment(s) within a period of seven (7) consecutive days, the student and parent(s) will receive a phone call from the instructor. During the call, the students, parents, and teacher will work to resolve any issues that prevent the student from submitting an acceptable number of assignments each week.
2. If the student does not respond to the phone call by submitting assignments within seven (7) days or does not continue to submit an acceptable number of assignments each week, the instructor will send an email to the student/parent(s) to remind them of the importance of submitting work and detailing the withdrawal process.
3. If the student does not respond by submitting assignments within fourteen (14) days of the initial phone call, FLVS will assume that the student does not intend to remain in the course, and the student will be administratively dropped from the course.
4. An official final grade report will be emailed to the student and his/her school upon completion of the course and the return of the course materials to the Florida Virtual School.

During the course request process, the student agrees to the following:

I acknowledge that during the first 28 days of being activated into my FLVS course, I may drop the course without penalty. Upon dropping a course after the first 28 days, a grade of WF will be issued. I understand that for each online course there are a minimum number of assignments that must be completed each week. Failure to submit the minimum number of assignments on a weekly basis may result in my removal from the course and may result in a failing grade being assigned to my academic transcript. If I drop the course after completing 50% of the class requirements and fail to take the final exam, Florida Virtual School will issue an "F" for my final grade. (Disclaimer: Local district/local school drop policies supersede.)

Important Note: Students, who have completed at least 50% of a semester course and decide to withdraw from the course, should be completed with a final grade of "F". Before a .5 credit can be earned in any course, the student must take and pass the semester final.

Email Policy

1. Check email frequently; at least twice per day. If you are going to be away from email for more than 1 day, use the "out of office" feature to alert people of your availability.
2. Archive all student communication via email for the current semester or year you are working with your student.
3. Create a system for storing email that would be logical to anyone. By student name is suggested.
4. Spell check all emails before sending.
5. Do not use email to address difficult or controversial issues with students or parents. This includes concerns over the tone of student's communication with you or with other students, concerns about the authenticity of student work, etc. Use the telephone. If you are unable

to reach a parent and/or student by phone, it is certainly acceptable to send them an email but try to refrain from using email as the forum for airing your concerns. Use email to alert them to the fact that you desire to speak to them via the telephone and identify some times in which you will be available should they desire to contact you.

Telephone/Voicemail Policy

1. Instructors are expected to check voicemail with the first check occurring no later than 9:00am. Full time staff is expected to check voicemail three times per day. Adjunct staff is expected to check voicemail once in the morning and once near the end of the workday.
2. Teachers are required to enter all telephone calls to students and parents into VSA. These logs are reviewed periodically by FLVS Administration and are used for school accountability reporting.

Welcome Phone Call Policy

Prior to being granted access to their online course, students must have a Welcome Phone Call conversation with their instructors.

Grading Student Work

1. A major component of proper communication is returning student work in a timely manner. It is The Florida Virtual School's policy that all communication be returned within 24 hours. Responding within 24 hours does not have to include the grading of all work that was submitted the previous day, only the acknowledgment of receipt of assignments or questions. It is the responsibility of the instructor to inform students about the expected turnaround time on grading work that has been submitted. All work should be graded in a timely manner and with a period of time that does not prevent the student from progressing through the course.
2. The Florida Virtual School uses the state adopted grading scale.

Per Florida statute: 232.2463 High School Grading System:

Grade A equals 90% through 100%....
Grade B equals 80% through 89%....
Grade C equals 70% through 79%...
Grade D equals 60% through 69%...
Grade F equals zero through 59%...

Policy for Documentation of Student Work

All student assessment records should be kept in the FLVS course management system. Primarily, student work will be completed within the course management system. The following procedures will apply to alternate forms of student work:

1. Keep digital documentation of any student assessments given by phone or in the chat room. Create a system for storing work that would be logical to anyone. Record the assessment grade and comments in Educator.
2. Any change in how an assignment, an assessment, a module exam and/or final exam is designed, delivered, altered or modified must have the approval of your District Franchise Manager

3. Keep digital documentation of any student work received by mail or fax. Create a system for storing work that would be logical to anyone. Record the assessment grade and comments in Educator.
4. All students are required to take all oral exams and pass the segment final exam before credit can be issued.

Progress Report Policy

Progress reports are created and sent via email to students and parents by the 15th of every month. If the 15th of the month falls on a weekend, reports will be sent on the previous Friday. As always, you are more than welcome to send your reports out early. If you are going to send them earlier than the 15th, please be sure that you are communicating with your students.

As a franchise teacher, I have read and agree to abide by all FLVS Franchise Policies.

Teacher Signature

Date

Franchise Leader

Date

Please submit a signed copy of this form to Donna Nicolodi at the Polk Virtual School office via fax at 863-534-7215 prior to the position closing date.

PVS will submit all appropriate forms to Janice Thompson at the FLVS office by fax at 1-407-513-3482 within 10 business days of teacher employment with our franchise school.