

Broward Virtual Education Student Survey 2007

As part of its Franchise Agreement with The Florida Virtual School (FLVS), Broward County Schools has agreed to survey its online students annually in order to learn more about the strengths and weaknesses of its virtual education program. The surveying process is a two-part procedure in which two distinct surveys are “sent” to students. The first survey is a general survey asking students some school-specific questions as well as several questions about the learners themselves. This survey is conducted in a mass email to students at the end of the school year; they are asked to go to a particular URL and complete the survey. Students complete this survey only once during the school year. The return rate for this portion of Broward’s data was 117 surveys or 11% of all the students who completed, were active, or who had dropped their online course in 2006-07. The feedback from these students is shown in Section One of this report.

The second survey is a teacher/course specific survey in which students are asked several questions about their virtual school course and teacher. This survey is automatically built into the students’ courses and works in the following manner. Once a student reaches 65% completion in his or her course, he is congratulated, told to complete the survey, and redirected to the survey URL. Thus, students may complete several of these surveys annually depending upon the number of virtual courses in which he/she participates. There were 2762 teacher/course specific surveys completed for Broward County as of May 14, 2007. Information on Broward County’s virtual courses and teachers is shared in the second section of this document.

The two-step surveying process described above allows stakeholders to have distinct information on the virtual school, as a whole, as well as feedback on the overall quality of courses and teachers. The remainder of this report shows students’ responses to all of the survey items.

Section One: General Feedback & Student Information

Please check the statement that best reflects your experience with your virtual school:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
I am currently taking an online course and have never withdrawn from an online course in the past.	73	62.4%	62.4%	62.4%
I am currently taking an online course but have withdrawn from an online course in the past.	17	14.5%	14.5%	14.5%
I am not taking any online course currently, but I have taken and completed at least one online course in the past.	21	17.9%	17.9%	17.9%
I am not taking any online course currently, nor have I completed any online course in the past.	6	5.1%	5.1%	5.1%

Please rate yourself on the following statements:

Topic	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Answered	Not Asked
I am highly motivated and self-disciplined.	54	54	5	2	2	0
I can set a personal schedule and complete assigned work by the required dates.	53	53	7	2	2	0
My writing and communication skills are better than average.	46	64	5	0	2	0
I try to solve problems and work through difficulties independently.	55	53	4	3	2	0
I can read and follow detailed instructions on my own.	57	56	1	0	3	0

The main reason I enrolled in the virtual school :

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
To take an extra course	14	12.0%	12.0%	12.0%
To take a course not offered at my school	8	6.8%	6.8%	6.8%
To raise a course grade/ grade forgiveness	19	16.2%	16.2%	16.2%
To balance academic and extracurricular activities	8	6.8%	6.8%	6.8%
Hospital Homebound	1	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%
Personal preference	15	12.8%	12.8%	12.8%
To accelerate graduation/ get ahead	16	13.7%	13.7%	13.7%
Other	36	30.8%	30.8%	30.8%

I access my online course(s) primarily from:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Home only	73	62.9%	62.4%	62.4%
School only	2	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%
Combination of home and school, but mostly home	19	16.4%	16.2%	16.2%
Combination of home and school, but mostly school	11	9.5%	9.4%	9.4%
School and home equally	10	8.6%	8.5%	8.5%
Community center or library	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	1	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%

I am a:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
public school student	88	75.9%	75.2%	75.2%
private school student	9	7.8%	7.7%	7.7%
home school student	17	14.7%	14.5%	14.5%
charter school student	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
other	2	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%

My general computer experience prior to my participation with this virtual school:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
No previous background	2	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%
A little experience	30	26.1%	25.6%	25.6%
A great deal	54	47.0%	46.2%	46.2%
Extremely proficient	29	25.2%	24.8%	24.8%

My general Internet experience prior to my participation with this virtual school:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
No previous background	2	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%
A little experience	19	16.5%	16.2%	16.2%
A great deal	55	47.8%	47.0%	47.0%
Extremely proficient	39	33.9%	33.3%	33.3%

My experience with this virtual school:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
I never have technical problems that interfere with getting work done.	40	34.5%	34.2%	34.2%
I sometimes have technical problems that interfere with getting work done.	65	56.0%	55.6%	55.6%
I often have technical problems that interfere with getting work done.	10	8.6%	8.5%	8.5%
I have a great deal of technical problems that interfere with getting work done.	1	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%

Most questions related to technical problems are resolved:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Within 24 hours	55	47.0%	47.0%	47.0%
Within 2 to 3 days	25	21.4%	21.4%	21.4%
In a period greater than 3 days	8	6.8%	6.8%	6.8%
Not applicable - I never have technical problems	29	24.8%	24.8%	24.8%

Most of my technical problems are resolved by:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Emails to help@flvs.net	8	7.0%	6.8%	6.8%
Calls to the tech help toll free number	3	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%
Contact with my teacher	78	67.8%	66.7%	66.7%
Other	26	22.6%	22.2%	22.2%

The learning management system (where the course content is accessed, where I turn in assignments, participate in discussion, and take exam) is:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Very easy to use	52	44.4%	44.4%	44.4%
Easy to use	54	46.2%	46.2%	46.2%
Difficult to use	7	6.0%	6.0%	6.0%
Very difficult to use	4	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%

Please explain:

- It needs a total redesign. it is confusing to navigate and it should be changed. Discussions should be removed along with assignment that have nothing to do with the course. Such as in my English 4 course there are assignment about joining the military. What is with that? Has nothing to do with English 4.
- anytime anywhere
- It's easy to use once you get the hang of it. In the beginning it was very confusing, but now it's a piece of cake.
- It's all right there, and I can find what I'm doing easily.
- The system is very easy once you get used to it.
- ACCESS STINKS, CONTENT STINKS, NAVIGATION STINKS, Everything is confusing.
- In the website everything is explained.
- They are very easy to use
- It is very simple to use
- its just easy
- I can get to the website really quickly.
- because all u do is clock on the browse button select you work and hit submit
- We recieve instructions at the beginning of each course explaining how to name files & where to submit them

Accessing my virtual school course(s) is:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Very easy; I can get into my course(s) whenever I want.	71	61.2%	60.7%	60.7%
Easy; I can almost always get into my course(s).	41	35.3%	35.0%	35.0%
Difficult; I often have trouble getting into my course(s).	4	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%
Very difficult; I very often have trouble getting into my course(s).	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

The online registration process was:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Very easy	51	43.6%	43.6%	43.6%
Easy	51	43.6%	43.6%	43.6%
Difficult	13	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
Very Difficult	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
I do not register online	2	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%

I found out about this virtual school from:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
a school counselor	68	58.6%	58.1%	58.1%
a friend	28	24.1%	23.9%	23.9%
an ad in my high school newspaper	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
a newspaper article	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
a TV news report or advertisement	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
a radio advertisement	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
a home education office	1	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%
a home school meeting or convention	1	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%
an Internet search	5	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%
a family member	2	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%
a community even or meeting (festivals, Rotary, etc)	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	11	9.5%	9.4%	9.4%

What part of this statement, "Any time, any place, any path, any pace," is most important to you in relation to your online course(s)?

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Any time	52	44.4%	44.4%	44.4%
Any place	18	15.4%	15.4%	15.4%
Any path	9	7.7%	7.7%	7.7%
Any pace	38	32.5%	32.5%	32.5%

- I can work on assignments at any time
 - All four are important but any time is the most important to me because you have to make the time to do school work and with this porgram you can find that time when you are available.
 - I can pretty much do it any where.
 - you have to stay on pace in the class most definetly.
 - it is very easy to get one this site anywhere that you want to.
 - you can complete it anywhere.
 - Baccuse i believe you should give the student time to do thing on there own pace.

I would recommend this virtual school to other students.

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Strongly agree	62	53.9%	53.0%	53.0%
Agree	41	35.7%	35.0%	35.0%
Disagree	7	6.1%	6.0%	6.0%
Strongly disagree	5	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%

What type of Internet connection do you primarily use while working on your online course(s)?

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Modem connection 28K or less	4	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%
Modem connection 56K or less	9	7.7%	7.7%	7.7%
Cable modem	25	21.4%	21.4%	21.4%
DSL	65	55.6%	55.6%	55.6%
High speed access from my school	14	12.0%	12.0%	12.0%

What type of computer do you use?

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Windows	106	91.4%	90.6%	90.6%
Macintosh	10	8.6%	8.5%	8.5%
Unix/Linux	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Which of the following technologies do you use regularly? (Choose all that apply.)

Choice	Count	Percent of Sample Asked	Percent of Total Sample
Cell Phone with Web Access or Smart Phone	77	65.8%	65.8%
MP3 Player/ iPod	85	72.6%	72.6%
Music Downloads	74	63.2%	63.2%
Online Gaming	38	32.5%	32.5%
PDA	8	6.8%	6.8%
Blogs	34	29.1%	29.1%

Section Two: Course/Teacher Items

Approximately, how long have/had you been active in this course?

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
< 1 month	99	3.7%	3.7%	3.7%
1-3 months	1646	61.4%	61.1%	61.1%
4-6 months	683	25.5%	25.3%	25.3%
7-10 months	213	7.9%	7.9%	7.9%
>10 months	39	1.5%	1.4%	1.4%

The goals and objectives of this online course are:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Very clear	1302	48.8%	48.3%	48.3%
Clear	1274	47.8%	47.3%	47.3%
Vague	82	3.1%	3.0%	3.0%
Non existent	8	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%

Overall, the directions throughout this online course are:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Very clear	1038	39.0%	38.5%	38.5%
Clear	1477	55.5%	54.8%	54.8%
Vague	145	5.4%	5.4%	5.4%
Non existent	3	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%

This online course captures/captured my attention.

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Strongly agree	673	25.2%	25.0%	25.0%
Agree	1658	62.0%	61.5%	61.5%
Disagree	293	11.0%	10.9%	10.9%
Strongly disagree	49	1.8%	1.8%	1.8%

The course materials provided to me assist/assisted me in being successful in this course.

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Strongly agree	744	28.0%	27.6%	27.6%
Agree	1456	54.8%	54.0%	54.0%
Disagree	113	4.3%	4.2%	4.2%
Strongly disagree	19	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%
Not applicable - No outside resources were provided to me for this course.	326	12.3%	12.1%	12.1%

Communication with the teacher(s) of this course is/was:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Great	1238	46.4%	45.9%	45.9%
Good	1073	40.2%	39.8%	39.8%
Fair	304	11.4%	11.3%	11.3%
Poor	52	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%

Most questions related to course content or assignments are/were resolved:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Within 24 hours	1725	65.0%	64.0%	64.0%
Within 2 to 3 days	659	24.8%	24.4%	24.4%
In a period greater than 3 days	62	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%
Not applicable - I've never had such questions.	209	7.9%	7.8%	7.8%

I spoke/speak with the teacher of this course:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
At least once a month	2087	78.7%	77.4%	77.4%
Once every two months	357	13.5%	13.2%	13.2%
Less than once every two months	166	6.3%	6.2%	6.2%
Never	42	1.6%	1.6%	1.6%

Communication with other students enrolled in this course is/was:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Great	357	13.5%	13.2%	13.2%
Good	830	31.3%	30.8%	30.8%
Fair	683	25.7%	25.3%	25.3%
Poor	783	29.5%	29.0%	29.0%

In this course, I use/used the synchronous chat functionality: (The synchronous chat function could be used for group tutorials held by teacher, student-to-student cooperative work, and/or one-on-one teacher-student interaction.)

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Very often	65	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%
Often	128	4.8%	4.7%	4.7%
Sometimes	313	11.8%	11.6%	11.6%
Never	1750	65.9%	64.9%	64.9%
Not available	398	15.0%	14.8%	14.8%

The chat functionality helps/helped me be successful in this course.

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Strongly agree	112	4.2%	4.2%	4.2%
Agree	319	12.1%	11.8%	11.8%
Disagree	93	3.5%	3.4%	3.4%
Strongly disagree	41	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%
Not applicable - I've never used the chat feature	1840	69.5%	68.2%	68.2%
Not available	242	9.1%	9.0%	9.0%

The hours per week I spend/spent completing this online course are about:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
0-1 hour per week	68	2.6%	2.5%	2.5%
1-2 hours per week	329	12.4%	12.2%	12.2%
2-4 hours per week	1055	39.8%	39.1%	39.1%
5-10 hours per week	987	37.2%	36.6%	36.6%
Over 10 hours per week	213	8.0%	7.9%	7.9%

Compared to a traditional high school class, the difficulty level of this online course is:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Much harder	168	6.3%	6.2%	6.2%
Harder	599	22.6%	22.2%	22.2%
The same level of difficulty	1057	39.9%	39.2%	39.2%
Easier	369	13.9%	13.7%	13.7%
Much easier	107	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%
Not sure	351	13.2%	13.0%	13.0%

Compared to a traditional high school class, the quality of this online course is:

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Much better	508	19.2%	18.8%	18.8%
Better	740	28.0%	27.4%	27.4%
The same quality	819	30.9%	30.4%	30.4%
Worse	158	6.0%	5.9%	5.9%
Much worse	34	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%
Not sure	388	14.7%	14.4%	14.4%

My online teacher(s) demonstrated an interest in my success as a student.

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Strongly agree	1288	48.5%	47.8%	47.8%
Agree	1289	48.5%	47.8%	47.8%
Disagree	58	2.2%	2.2%	2.2%
Strongly disagree	20	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%

Conclusion

Broward Virtual Education's fourth year in operation has been another very successful one. Over 2700 students responded to Part Two of this survey which means results for this section were very reliable and representative of the Broward Virtual School's student population this year.

A majority of the BVE's online students were happy with their online course experiences, as indicated by the 89.6% who said they would recommend BVE to others. Almost half (47.2%) agreed that the quality of BVE courses were either "better" or "much better" than traditional high school courses and almost a third (30.9%) felt their online courses were the "same" quality as traditional courses.

Student feedback in the area of communication was also favorable and has increased in some areas. 78.7% of survey respondents reported that they had contact with their teacher at least once a month (compared to 72% in 2006, and 57% in 2005). 65% of students reported that any problems they had were resolved by their teachers within 24 hours, and approximately a quarter (24.8%) of students said that resolution came usually within 2 to 3 days. These figures are in line with last year's results. Almost half of the student respondents (46.4%) felt that communication with their teachers in general was "great," 40.2% felt it was "good," and 13.3% said it was either "fair" or "poor."

Related to communication, almost all of the students who responded (97%) said that their online teachers demonstrated an interest in their success as a student: *"I really want to comment on Mrs. Daley's keen interest in her students' performance, always giving her students a slight push, by this, I mean giving numerous words of encouragement, like 'you know you can do it.' and offering extra-credits to motivate students in completing the course successfully;" "He made sure that he did everything he could to help me understand and make good grades;" "She always asks how I am doing in the course and gives me feedback on my assignments."*

This year has been another great year for BVE reflected in the pages of positive comments like the ones listed below:

- *"The best thing about Broward Virtual School is that the teachers make time for you. If you have questions or concerns, teachers are there for you when you need them. They work just as hard and even harder than some traditional school teachers. The staff of this school are amazing and they truly care about their students."*
- *"The simplicity of the instructions...allows for easy comprehension and as a result makes it easy to complete the assignments."*
- *"... I learned lots of things related to real life and college."*
- *"In a traditional class, most teachers won't go into great detail about every lesson as the online class did."*
- *"There are clear instructions and you just go from there and complete all your assignments."*
- *"This may sound ironic, but with the online class I felt I could communicate with my teacher in a more effective manner."*
- *"I learn a lot better and retain the knowledge a lot more."*