

# **Okaloosa Online Student Survey 2007**

As part of its Franchise Agreement with The Florida Virtual School (FLVS), Okaloosa 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 Okaloosa’s data was 31 surveys or 6% 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 616 teacher/course specific surveys completed for Okaloosa County as of May 14, 2007. Information on Okaloosa 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I am currently taking an online course and have never withdrawn from an online course in the past.	18	60.0%	58.1%	58.1%
I am currently taking an online course but have withdrawn from an online course in the past.	3	10.0%	9.7%	9.7%
I am not taking any online course currently, but I have taken and completed at least one online course in the past.	8	26.7%	25.8%	25.8%
I am not taking any online course currently, nor have I completed any online course in the past.	1	3.3%	3.2%	3.2%

**Please rate yourself on the following statements: - A**

Topic	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Answered	Not Asked
I am highly motivated and self-disciplined.	8	19	2	1	1	0
I can set a personal schedule and complete assigned work by the required dates.	10	15	5	0	1	0
My writing and communication skills are better than average.	11	16	3	0	1	0
I try to solve problems and work through difficulties independently.	9	20	1	0	1	0
I can read and follow detailed instructions on my own.	15	15	0	0	1	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	3	10.0%	9.7%	9.7%
To take a course not offered at my school	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
To raise a course grade/ grade forgiveness	3	10.0%	9.7%	9.7%
To balance academic and extracurricular activities	5	16.7%	16.1%	16.1%
Hospital Homebound	1	3.3%	3.2%	3.2%
Personal preference	9	30.0%	29.0%	29.0%
To accelerate graduation/ get ahead	4	13.3%	12.9%	12.9%
Other	5	16.7%	16.1%	16.1%

**I access my online course(s) primarily from:**

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Home only	24	82.8%	77.4%	77.4%
School only	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Combination of home and school, but mostly home	3	10.3%	9.7%	9.7%
Combination of home and school, but mostly school	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
School and home equally	1	3.4%	3.2%	3.2%
Community center or library	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	1	3.4%	3.2%	3.2%

**I am a:**

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
public school student	24	80.0%	77.4%	77.4%
private school student	4	13.3%	12.9%	12.9%
home school student	2	6.7%	6.5%	6.5%
charter school student	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
other	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

**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	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
A little experience	8	26.7%	25.8%	25.8%
A great deal of computer experience	18	60.0%	58.1%	58.1%
Extremely proficient	4	13.3%	12.9%	12.9%

**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	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
A little experience	3	10.0%	9.7%	9.7%
A great deal of Internet experience	20	66.7%	64.5%	64.5%
Extremely proficient	7	23.3%	22.6%	22.6%

**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.	15	50.0%	48.4%	48.4%
I sometimes have technical problems that interfere with getting work done.	12	40.0%	38.7%	38.7%
I often have technical problems that interfere with getting work done.	2	6.7%	6.5%	6.5%
I have a great deal of technical problems that interfere with getting work done.	1	3.3%	3.2%	3.2%

**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	8	26.7%	25.8%	25.8%
Within 2 to 3 days	8	26.7%	25.8%	25.8%
In a period greater than 3 days	2	6.7%	6.5%	6.5%
Not applicable - I never have technical problems	12	40.0%	38.7%	38.7%

**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	6	20.0%	19.4%	19.4%
Calls to the tech help toll free number	1	3.3%	3.2%	3.2%
Contact with my teacher	17	56.7%	54.8%	54.8%
Other	6	20.0%	19.4%	19.4%

**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	12	40.0%	38.7%	38.7%
Easy to use	17	56.7%	54.8%	54.8%
Difficult to use	1	3.3%	3.2%	3.2%
Very difficult to use	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

**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.	22	73.3%	71.0%	71.0%
Easy; I can almost always get into my course(s).	8	26.7%	25.8%	25.8%
Difficult; I often have trouble getting into my course(s).	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
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	8	26.7%	25.8%	25.8%
Easy	18	60.0%	58.1%	58.1%
Difficult	1	3.3%	3.2%	3.2%
Very Difficult	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
I do not register online	3	10.0%	9.7%	9.7%

**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	16	53.3%	51.6%	51.6%
a friend	10	33.3%	32.3%	32.3%
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	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
a home school meeting or convention	1	3.3%	3.2%	3.2%
an Internet search	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
a family member	3	10.0%	9.7%	9.7%
a community even or meeting (festivals, Rotary, etc)	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

**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	13	43.3%	41.9%	41.9%
Any place	1	3.3%	3.2%	3.2%
Any path	3	10.0%	9.7%	9.7%
Any pace	13	43.3%	41.9%	41.9%

**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	12	40.0%	38.7%	38.7%
Agree	16	53.3%	51.6%	51.6%
Disagree	2	6.7%	6.5%	6.5%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

**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	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Modem connection 56K or less	1	3.3%	3.2%	3.2%
Cable modem	20	66.7%	64.5%	64.5%
DSL	9	30.0%	29.0%	29.0%
High speed access from my school	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

**What type of computer do you use?**

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Windows	27	93.1%	87.1%	87.1%
Macintosh	2	6.9%	6.5%	6.5%
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	14	45.2%	45.2%
MP3 Player/ iPod	18	58.1%	58.1%
Music Downloads	20	64.5%	64.5%
Online Gaming	13	41.9%	41.9%
PDA	3	9.7%	9.7%
Blogs	10	32.3%	32.3%

## **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	13	2.1%	2.1%	2.1%
1-3 months	324	52.8%	52.6%	52.6%
4-6 months	231	37.6%	37.5%	37.5%
7-10 months	41	6.7%	6.7%	6.7%
>10 months	5	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%

**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	293	47.8%	47.6%	47.6%
Clear	300	48.9%	48.7%	48.7%
Vague	20	3.3%	3.2%	3.2%
Non existent	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

**Overall, the directions throughout this online course are:**

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Very clear	232	37.8%	37.7%	37.7%
Clear	337	55.0%	54.7%	54.7%
Vague	42	6.9%	6.8%	6.8%
Non existent	2	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%

**This online course captures/captured my attention.**

Choice	Count	Percentage of Sample Answering	Percentage of Sample Asked	Percentage of Total Sample
Strongly agree	139	22.6%	22.6%	22.6%
Agree	392	63.8%	63.6%	63.6%
Disagree	66	10.7%	10.7%	10.7%
Strongly disagree	17	2.8%	2.8%	2.8%

**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	174	28.3%	28.2%	28.2%
Agree	348	56.7%	56.5%	56.5%
Disagree	23	3.7%	3.7%	3.7%
Strongly disagree	4	0.7%	0.6%	0.6%
Not applicable - No outside resources were provided to me for this course.	65	10.6%	10.6%	10.6%

**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	279	45.4%	45.3%	45.3%
Good	262	42.7%	42.5%	42.5%
Fair	58	9.4%	9.4%	9.4%
Poor	15	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%

**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	316	51.9%	51.3%	51.3%
Within 2 to 3 days	193	31.7%	31.3%	31.3%
In a period greater than 3 days	25	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%
Not applicable - I've never had such questions.	75	12.3%	12.2%	12.2%

**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	459	74.8%	74.5%	74.5%
Once every two months	98	16.0%	15.9%	15.9%
Less than once every two months	47	7.7%	7.6%	7.6%
Never	10	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	81	13.3%	13.1%	13.1%
Good	191	31.5%	31.0%	31.0%
Fair	176	29.0%	28.6%	28.6%
Poor	159	26.2%	25.8%	25.8%

**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	18	2.9%	2.9%	2.9%
Often	18	2.9%	2.9%	2.9%
Sometimes	65	10.6%	10.6%	10.6%
Never	425	69.6%	69.0%	69.0%
Not available	85	13.9%	13.8%	13.8%

**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	20	3.3%	3.2%	3.2%
Agree	59	9.6%	9.6%	9.6%
Disagree	31	5.1%	5.0%	5.0%
Strongly disagree	3	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
Not applicable - I've never used the chat feature	446	72.9%	72.4%	72.4%
Not available	53	8.7%	8.6%	8.6%

**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	15	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%
1-2 hours per week	101	16.4%	16.4%	16.4%
2-4 hours per week	274	44.6%	44.5%	44.5%
5-10 hours per week	192	31.3%	31.2%	31.2%
Over 10 hours per week	32	5.2%	5.2%	5.2%

**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	37	6.0%	6.0%	6.0%
Harder	109	17.8%	17.7%	17.7%
The same level of difficulty	257	42.0%	41.7%	41.7%
Easier	108	17.6%	17.5%	17.5%
Much easier	42	6.9%	6.8%	6.8%
Not sure	59	9.6%	9.6%	9.6%

**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	129	21.1%	20.9%	20.9%
Better	186	30.5%	30.2%	30.2%
The same quality	208	34.1%	33.8%	33.8%
Worse	21	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%
Much worse	12	2.0%	1.9%	1.9%
Not sure	54	8.9%	8.8%	8.8%

**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	291	47.4%	47.2%	47.2%
Agree	292	47.6%	47.4%	47.4%
Disagree	28	4.6%	4.5%	4.5%
Strongly disagree	3	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%

**Conclusion**

Students who participated in Okaloosa Online's virtual courses report that their overall experience has been very positive. This year's data suggests some notable improvements over last year.

This year, 85.7% of students responding rated the quality of their online course as either the "same as," "better," or "much better" than a traditional high school course. This is up from 81% in 2006 and 74% in 2005.

95% of students reported that they either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that their teachers demonstrated an interest in their success as a student, this up from 92% last year.

74.8% of students stated they spoke with their teachers at least once a month (as compared with 62% last year); 16% said they spoke with their teachers once every two months (as compared with 17% last year); 7.7% spoke with teachers less than every two months (as compared with 13% last year); and only 1.6% reported no communication at all (as compared with 8% last year). This data represents some impressive improvements, while the same goals as last year still apply: to continue to

increase communication levels between students and teachers, and to strive for 0% of students to report no communication at all.

The majority of comments throughout both surveys provide validation that Okaloosa Online has been a positive experience for students. Here is a sampling of their positive comments:

- *“I don't have to worry about other students interfering with my learning and I can go at my own pace.”*
- *“The teachers are great, and I am glad I had the opportunity to take classes online.”*
- *“It's better than sitting in a classroom bored out of my mind. I get to find answers and learn more than I would in a class room.”*
- *“Once you get into it, it really makes you want to continue.”*
- *“At times, I have to do additional web research in order to get more details on certain areas. This has been helpful to me to supplement what is provided by the online course.”*
- *“If you think you can escape your teacher, you have another thing coming! They know exactly what you are doing and how long you stay online.”*