

Florida Virtual School the online answer

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South Fort Myers High School

Have you ever wanted to cower in a corner every time it's time to dress out for P.E?

Are you mortified every time you must recite Spanish in front of a group? Do you want to find a way to finish high school faster, but you really don't want to go to night school?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then Florida Virtual School just might be the answer for you.

Florida Virtual School, an online learning program, was founded in 1997 by two Florida district teachers, who began with just 77 enrollments and a group of educators who bravely entered the world of online learning. Today, FLVS, as it is known, serves over 20,000 students, who are enrolled in over 33,000 courses.

The administration of FLVS has discovered in its nine-year history that online learning is meeting a varied amount of needs, including credit retrieval, advancement, and access to courses that are not normally available.

Kira Dobbs, a freshman at South Fort Myers School, has taken one course on Florida's Virtual School and feels she's learned just as much as if she were sitting in a classroom. Dobbs is one of more than 20 students at South taking a class online.

"It's easy, but it's hard because you have to keep on track," she says. "Some kids think it's just a breeze because it's online, but it's not because if you don't do the work you won't finish."

Bonnie Mazza, guidance counselor at South Fort Myers High, has seen firsthand the results of Florida Virtual School.

"For a student that is highly motivated it is wonderful," she says. "We try to stress to students that this is a class that is taught via the computer, not a 'computer class.' "

In other words, you're not getting off easy if you take a class this way. It's the same amount of material and work. The grade you earn will go on your permanent transcript.