



## **Online school program growing and offering more**

September 06, 2007

By Sean Boone

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Florida Virtual School program and more middle and high school students than ever are enrolling in the free online courses.

As of June 29, there have been more than 30,000 half-credit course enrollments and 21,000 physical students signed up for the 90 available courses. In 2002 there were 41 half-credit enrollments in Walton County. Half-credit enrollment surpassed 300 in 2005.

There is no limit to the amount of courses a student can take, but one must have guardian approval before enrolling.

“The great thing is that students don’t have to take their full schedule with us,” said Sequoia Public Relations for Florida Virtual School Jodie Pozo-Olano. “We are very flexible.”

The FLVS program, which spans all 67 state school districts, allows public, private or home school students the opportunity to take a variety of classes that range from advanced placement courses to electives that students might not be able to enroll in at their home school.

“We’re definitely a good option to fill a lot of needs,” said FLVS Public Affairs Liaison Ya’frica Tadesse. “Families who know about the program usually take advantage of it.”

FLVS is part of the Florida Department of Education and is funded according to student performance instead of enrollment numbers. There are more than 305 full-time and 160 adjunct teachers who teach within the state program.

“All teachers are certified in the area that they are teaching classes,” said Tadesse.

Seventy-two percent of the students enrolled this summer were from public and charter schools with females making up the majority of the enrollees. Students enrolled with FLVS are also able to join clubs and compete against other schools throughout the state at competitive events.

“I think its kind of cool to hear the stories the students have,” said Pozo-Olano. “The virtual students do incredibly well against students who see each other day in and day out.”

Copyright © 2008 The Walton Sun