

**160-8-1-.01 GEORGIA VIRTUAL SCHOOL.**

**(1) DEFINITIONS.**

(a) **Administrative Costs** - expenses incurred by the local school systems for delivery of online learning courses via the Georgia Virtual School. Examples include: certain maintenance and operations expenses and facilitator stipends.

(b) **Eligible Student** – student, age 21 years or younger, who attends a public or private school or is in a home study program in the state of Georgia.

(c) **Facilitator** – full-time, part-time, contracted, and instructional or support staff from a public or private school who have been selected to act as the designated contact for the Georgia Virtual School and students in their school or district.

(d) **Full Time Equivalent (FTE)** – formula that divides high school students’ regular school day into six reporting segments or their equivalent for funding purposes.

(e) **Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE)** – the state agency charged with the fiscal and administrative management of certain aspects of K–12 public education including the implementation of federal and state mandates. Such management is subject to supervision and oversight by the State Board of Education.

(f) **Georgia Virtual School** – Georgia Department of Education instructional program offering students online learning courses in accordance with O.C.G.A. § 20-2-319.1 hereto referred to as the Georgia Virtual School.

(g) **Learning Management System** – instructional technology used to teach online classes.

(h) **Local Teacher-Led Virtual Course** – a type of virtual course in which the local school provides the highly qualified teacher and course materials, and Georgia Virtual School provides the standards-based curriculum, enrollment of students and locally provided teacher in Georgia Virtual School courses, training and full-use of virtual classroom tools, technical support to locally provided teachers and students, and instructional support to locally provided teachers.

(i) **Online Learning Courses** – State Board of Education-approved courses of instruction directly correlated to the state-approved curriculum that is delivered via the Internet or in any other electronic medium not involving on-site interaction with a teacher.

(j) **Regular School Day** – schedule of courses taken as part of public school students’ regular school day which consists of six segments or its FTE equivalent. For private and home study students the regular school day is the equivalent of four and one half hours during 180 instructional days.

(k) **Seat** – equivalent of one student enrolled in an online learning course for one half unit credit.

(l) **Summer School** – time period in excess of 180 instructional days.

(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**

(a) **General.**

1. The Georgia Virtual School is authorized to provide online learning courses to eligible students in the State of Georgia.

2. Local school systems and private schools, as a condition for participation in the Georgia Virtual School shall agree to transcribe and award credit earned by students completing coursework through the Georgia Virtual School.

3. The Georgia Department of Education shall coordinate all Georgia Virtual School activities and services for private and home study students.

4. The Georgia Department of Education shall develop and maintain the necessary guidelines and protocols for operation of the Georgia Virtual School.

(b) **Funding and Tuition.**

1. The Georgia Department of Education is authorized to establish a Georgia Virtual School grant account with funds appropriated by the General Assembly. The amount of funds requested by the State Board for this account shall be based on the annual state appropriation and from collected tuition.

2. Funds may be appropriated for online learning courses taken by students in Georgia Virtual School courses who meet the following criteria for course enrollments during the regular school day:

(i) Public school student who is taking a course(s) as a part of their regular five and one half hours instructional day or its time equivalent pursuant to State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1.02 School Day and School Year for Students and Employees.

(ii) Private or home study student who is taking a course(s) as a part of his or her regular four and one half hours instructional day or its time equivalent pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690.

3. Local school boards with students enrolled in online learning programs for courses during the regular school day shall be funded in the amount that the participating students would have earned if those students had been in an equivalent FTE general education programs in a local school for that portion of the instructional day in which the students were enrolled in an online learning course.

4. Tuition shall be collected by the Georgia Virtual School staff for public school, private school, and home study students:

(i) Who are enrolled outside of the regular school day, as defined by the Georgia Department of Education.

(ii) Who are enrolled in a summer school term as defined in this rule.

**(c) Registration.**

1. A student shall register for Georgia Virtual School courses through an online registration system developed in accordance with program guidelines.

2. Students registered in a Georgia public school, private school or home study program shall receive written approval from a facilitator prior to being enrolled in a Georgia Virtual School online learning course.

3. Students enrolled in a Georgia Virtual School online learning course shall be assigned a Georgia Testing Identifier (GTID) as set forth in State Board of Education Rule 160-5-1-.07 Student Data Collection.

**(d) Personnel.**

1. Instructional staff employed or contracted by the Georgia Virtual School shall meet the requirements for teacher certification as required by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. Every Georgia Virtual School teacher is also required to complete training as outlined in the *Georgia Virtual School Teacher Handbook*.

2. As a condition of employment, instructional staff employed by the Georgia Virtual School shall abide by the responsibilities, guidelines and procedures as set forth in the Georgia Virtual School Teacher Handbook.

3. As a condition of employment, instructional staff-employed by the Georgia Virtual School shall be evaluated based on criteria identified by the Georgia Department of Education.

4. Facilitators shall be appointed by local school systems or private school administrators and may be full-time, part-time, contracted, and instructional or support staff. Facilitators shall abide by the responsibilities, guidelines and procedures as set forth in the *Georgia Virtual School Facilitator Handbook*.

**(e) Student Expectations.**

1. Students must agree to abide by the Georgia Virtual School guidelines, procedures, and policies as outlined in the *Georgia Virtual School Student Handbook*.

2. A student enrolled in the Georgia Virtual School shall earn a final numeric grade at the end of every course attempted unless the student withdraws from the course according to the guidelines in the Georgia Virtual School Student Handbook handbook. Grades earned, including final grades, final exams and state approved assessments shall comply with State Board of Education Rule 160-4-2-.13 Statewide Passing Score. Local school systems and private schools that approve student course enrollment(s) shall accurately transcribe a student's Georgia Virtual School final grade to the student's permanent record/transcript. A home study student shall be provided a certificate of completion indicating date, course, and numeric grade from the Georgia Virtual School.

**(f) Instruction Process.**

1. The Georgia Virtual School and approved entities shall provide access to students through a learning management system that adequately teaches and assesses courses through the online medium.

2. The Georgia Virtual School and approved entities shall provide all instructional materials necessary for all participating students and teachers, except those in local teacher-led virtual courses, as defined in this rule. Approved entities or local school systems with online programs shall provide the instructional materials through their programs.

3. The Georgia Virtual School and all approved entities shall maintain records of students' participation in online learning courses pursuant to applicable records retention policies.

4. The Georgia Virtual School and approved entities shall authorize the administration and abide by rules of all tests as required by the Department for completion of a course(s).

5. The Georgia Virtual School and approved entities shall maintain minimum accessibility to course content as outlined by the Department.

**(g) Curriculum and Course Quality.**

1. The Georgia Virtual School and approved entities shall adhere to course and course numbering as set forth in State Board of Education rule.

Authority O.C.G.A. § 20-2-319.1

**Adopted:** June 15, 2017

**Effective:** July 5, 2017