



Effingham County School District

Guidelines for Virtual School Classes

Rationale

As it is the mission of Effingham County School District (ECSD) “*To provide rigorous and relevant instruction in a safe environment to enable all students to obtain a high school diploma as a foundation for post secondary success,*” and utilization of technology, especially to take advantage of online courses will lead to increased success in post secondary opportunities, ECSD encourages students to avail themselves of online learning opportunities available through the Georgia Virtual School (GaVS) program.

The GaVS program provides the following description on their website:

Georgia Virtual School is a program of the Georgia Department of Education's Office of Technology Services. The program is SACS CASI accredited and operates in partnership with schools and parents to offer middle school and high school level courses across the state. Georgia Virtual School provides a teacher led, virtual classroom environment. Georgia Virtual School also equips students with an online media center and guidance center to support students throughout their online course experience.

In a cooperative effort with GaVS, ECSD encourages students to consider an online option for either courses that are locally not available or for courses the student may believe themselves to be more successful in when taken in an online environment.

Process

Understanding the importance of a student meeting graduation and/or CTAE pathway requirements, the process of electing to take advantage of an online course should begin by discussing the option with the student’s advisor and/or counselor. Parents and guardians are required to participate in the discussion with the appropriate school personnel prior to student enrollment in an online course.

After verifying that the selected course meets the needs of the student’s plan for graduation and/or CTAE pathway, the student should assess whether he/she is prepared for an online course through GaVS. Students should:

1. Visit the GaVS website (<http://www.gavirtualschool.org>) and read the information carefully. Students should be acutely aware of schedules and deadlines pertaining to the courses selected. Information on the GaVS website may change as the semester progresses.
2. Be familiar with the GaVS program technical requirements. GaVS provides a document describing minimal requirements for GaVS courses on its website (this document is accessible via the QR code at the end of this document).

3. Complete the Enrollment Agreement (available at the end of this document or through the counselor's office) and return it to the school registrar. After the registrar has received the Enrollment Agreement, and the student's counselor has approved the registration, the student may register for the desired online course. The registration document will detail if the course is paid for by the school district or by the student or parent.

As ECSD has limited access to computer resources, students are encouraged to bring their own technology to access online classes while at school during the school day. Alternately, students whose schedule includes an online class during the first or last period of the day AND who can provide their own transportation, may utilize this opportunity to work at home in an approved late-arrival and/or early-dismissal scenario, allowing for more flexibility for the student. ECSD **cannot** provide transportation if the student elects to take advantage of this option and this option may be revoked if attendance or punctuality to other classes becomes a problem.

Other Considerations

1. ECSD high school students must enroll in seven (7) courses each semester, which may include one or more GaVS courses, unless participating in senior privilege or dual enrollment. Students must remain enrolled in all classes throughout the duration of the semester.
2. Once a student has selected, been approved and enrolled in an online course, the **student must complete the online course**. If during the **completion** of the first semester of an online course, the student determines they would be more successful in a traditional classroom, they should discuss this with their guidance counselor. Arrangements **may** be made for a student to complete the second semester of a year long course in a traditional classroom.
3. Courses taken as part of the regular school day schedule are eligible for district funding. Any course(s) taken in addition to a regular schedule will be ineligible for district funding and all costs associated with this course must be paid by the parent or guardian. **Additionally, quality points normally afforded certain courses taken as part of a regular schedule will not be awarded to courses taken in supplement of a regular schedule.**
4. ECSD will use GaVS as a preapproved provider of online courses. Other providers of online courses must be evaluated on an individual basis and must be approved by a school guidance counselor before being taken for credit. Courses taken through providers other than GaVS will receive no funding through the district and all costs associated with said course will become the responsibility of the parent or guardian of the student.





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Georgia Virtual School Enrollment Agreement

_____ (student) is requesting enrollment in one or more online course(s) through Georgia Virtual School (GaVS). Students should be enrolled in a minimum of seven (7) courses including regular and online courses unless participating in an approved reduced schedule such as senior privilege or dual enrollment.

List below each GaVS course request and rationale for the request in the table below:

GaVS Course	Rationale	Guidance Approval	Fees Paid by:

These courses are requested for: Fall Spring Summer _____ (year)

Credit

1. All courses will be posted to the high school transcript and will reflect the grade reported by GaVS.
2. Advanced and AP courses through GaVS will be weighted according to ECSD policy. Quality points will be awarded for designated Advanced and AP courses that are taken through GaVS as scheduled during the regular school day. Supplemental courses taken through GaVS will **not** be awarded quality points.
3. EOCTs will be administered and weighted according to state policy for EOCTs.

High school students who have elected to participate in GaVS courses will be subject to the rules of GaVS, ECSD, and the high school they attend. Consideration to be named valedictorian or salutatorian is conditioned upon attendance at the same high school for a two year period and completion of at least 50% of their coursework in classes taught by ECSD personnel in their junior and senior years. For additional clarification, check with your guidance counselor.

In order to ensure accurate information about eligibility and requirements for high school sports and NCAA with regard to GaVS classes, it is highly recommended that the student and parent be in close contact with GaVS, the NCAA, and the school's athletic director. Eligibility for post secondary athletics is the responsibility of the student and parent as the district takes no responsibility in determining if online courses meet or do not meet NCAA requirements which may be above entrance requirements for college admission.

Signatures below indicate that both student and parent or guardian have read the GaVS information, and the advisor or counselor approves the student to enroll himself or herself in the GaVS course(s) listed above.

Student Signature

Advisor or Counselor Signature

Parent Signature

Date