



Breakthroughs and Best Practices for Technology Leaders
October 19, 2005 ♦ Palisades, NY

Virtual Schools, Real Learning- **Florida Virtual School**

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Florida Virtual School (FLVS)

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A School Without Walls

Where Every Student Has A Front Row Seat



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FLVS Overview

FLVS Offerings

FLVS Students

Keys to Success & Lessons Learned



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What is FLVS?

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- State-wide *public* virtual high school
- An innovative plan to increase opportunities for:
 - ❖ “Under-served” Populations:
 - Rural schools
 - Low-performing schools
 - ❖ Acceleration and Advancement
 - ❖ Expanding access to courses and options
 - ❖ Class-size reduction initiatives



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FLVS Milestones

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- 1997 FLVS created out of a partnership between two districts with grant from the Florida Department of Education
- 1998 Began to establish a state-wide presence
- 2000 Greatly expanded course offerings and staff
- 2001 Began to establish a national and international presence
- 2002 Began developing middle school and adult education (GED) courses
- 2003 Implemented performance-based funding model with state legislature
- 2004 Developed and launched Test Reviews for AP with support from The Florida College Board Partnership
- 2005 Complete middle school curriculum launch

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What Do We Offer?

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Online Courses, Instruction, Professional Development

Professional Development:

- Mentoring / Developing AP Teachers
- Leadership Training for Administrators
- Training and Mentoring for Online Teachers
- High Stakes Test Resources

80+ Courses Include:

- Advanced Placement
- Honors
- Core and Elective Courses
- Middle School
- GED
- Adult Education
- Test Prep (AP, SAT, FCAT)

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Accomplished Practitioners

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- Thought Leader on issues related to
 - Funding online programs
 - Accountability
 - Online course delivery and instruction
 - Online school leadership
- Award Winning School
 - Three time recipient: *Excellence in Distance Learning Programming* – USDLA
 - Two time recipient: *Most Outstanding Achievement by an Individual* – USDLA
 - Named a “Top 50 Web Smart” Organization by Business Week magazine
- Accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and The Commission on International and Trans-Regional Education



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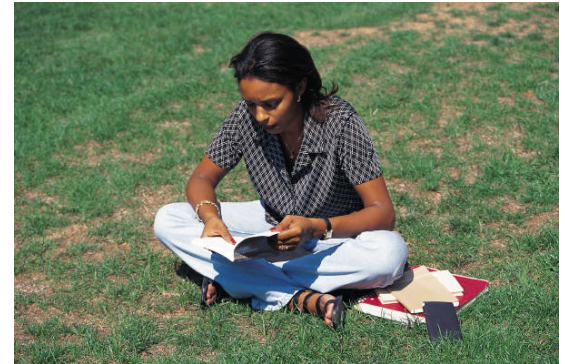
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Attracting Students

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- Choice
- Flexibility
- Expand Public School Offerings
- Expand Private School Offerings
- Hospital Homebound
- Home Education



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Online Learning Cooked Up Right

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- Increases student motivation and achievement
- Interactive learning environment is highly teacher facilitated
- Curriculum built upon recognized standards
- Connects students from various backgrounds
- Instructors certified in their subject area
- Requires active versus passive learning
- Provides individualized instruction opportunities:
Learning is one on one
- Encourages higher-level thinking
- Involves parents
- Utilizes resources of the whole “wired” world
- Expands learning time
- Prepares students for post-secondary and the workplace



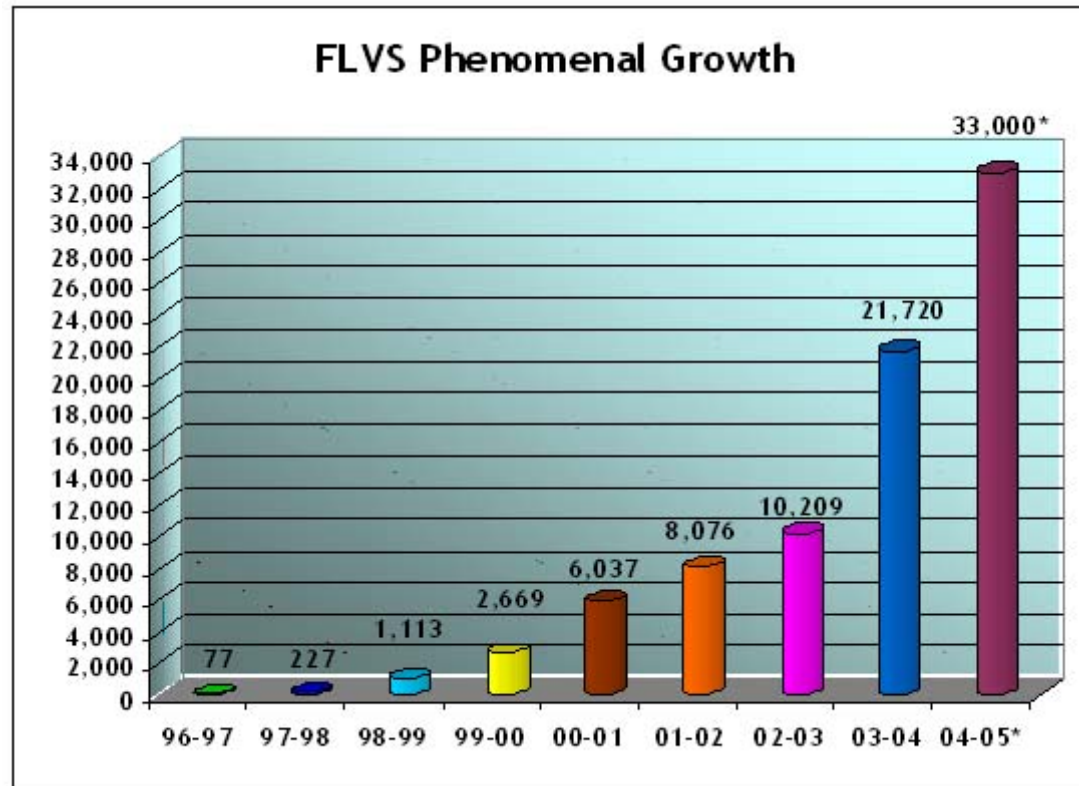
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Enrollment History

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Where are our students from?

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74% Public school

20% Home schooled

6% Private school

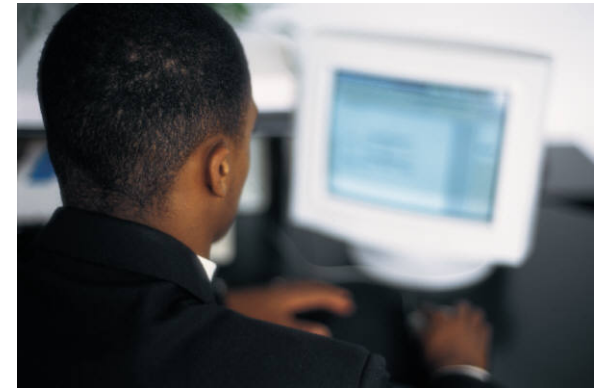




Average - Courses per Student

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- School-Wide 1.68 courses per student
- Public 1.5
- Charter 1.9
- Private 1.8
- Homeschool 3.1



FLVS does not issue a diploma

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Accessing Online Courses

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In-school model

- *School labs*
- *Entire schools*
- *Blended model*



Out-of-school model

- *Augmenting traditional school offerings*
- *Homeschooling*
- *Homebound*



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Benefits of Online Learning

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- Individualized lessons
- Personalized attention
- Performance based
- Options for pace variations
- Flexibility of time

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Success Factors & Lessons Learned

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- Teamwork – Having the right people “on the bus”
- Course Design
- Clear communication policies for students and staff
- Support from the stakeholders



- Build relationships with school contacts – especially counselors
- Not for all students, but don’t prejudge
- Not for all teachers, but don’t prejudge
- Funding often dictates cooperation or competition

Education is about building relationships

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