

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### Alternative Virtual Academy – Web-Based Learning

- **What is virtual learning?** Virtual learning is the use of the internet to reach a specific learning platform that has an inventory of information, facts, diagrams, models, videos and other learning aides to assist learners with the acquisition of knowledge. In addition, such platforms/websites are also equipped with various assessment and evaluation tools to determine where students are and how they are progressing.
  
- **Why does my child have to participate in virtual learning?** If your child has been assigned to the Clayton County Public School's Alternative Program via the tribunal process, he/she will be required to take all of his/her classes online in order to meet exit criteria and return to his/her home school. The Alternative Program is now using a virtual learning program called Odyssey Ware to provide non-traditional learning opportunities for students. Research suggests that the traditional school setting does not adequately support the needs of at-risk youth. In addition, virtual learning provides students with the flexibility to work at their own pace while accruing credit, recovering credit, and accelerating in the academic process.
  
- **Will my child be at home all the time?** No... High school students will be required to come to school every month for a minimum of six hours. This time is referred to as face-to-face time and students will receive ongoing support services to include: individualized instruction with certified teachers in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Special Education. Additional clinical services will be provided by the social worker, counselors, and the school psychologist. Students will have access to real time video instructional sessions via the Skype application. Adjustments to face-to-face time will be made according to each student's academic success plan.

Middle school students will be on campus Monday thru Friday for a period of four hours. Students will be assigned to either the morning session or the afternoon session. The Virtual Academy reserves the right to schedule students based on availability, behavior issues, support needs, etc.

- **How will attendance be kept for a student in the virtual academy?** High school students will be required to record a minimum of 20 hours per week for *time-on-task* and for any additional assignments required by teachers while logged into the OdysseyWare platform in order to earn daily attendance credit. Students are permitted to complete assignments at their own pace, however, it is recommended that students login each day Monday thru Friday, for a minimum of 4 hours a day in order to receive daily credit for attending class.
  
- **What if my child has questions about something he/she does not understand?** Each student will be assigned a teacher who will provide support during face-to-face time, via Skype video conferencing, and/or the online message center. Support teachers will coordinate individualized instructional activities in English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Students will have access to an online grade reporting, progress monitoring, and other communication services such as email.
  
- **Will my child get what other students in regular schools are getting academically?** OdysseyWare is a state approved online/web-based platform that offers courses that are correlated to the Georgia Performance Standards. All students will be scheduled for a minimum of six courses based upon their needs.
  
- **How many classes will my child take in the virtual academy?** All students will take a minimum of six classes. Students may take additional classes for credit recovery depending on academic and promotional needs. Additional courses may be assigned to students to support learning needs and will be outlined in each student's academic success plan.
  
- **As a parent of a high school student, how will I communicate with my child's teacher?** Parents will still be able to contact the school to communicate with teachers. Teachers are also accessible via district email and the message center through OdysseyWare. In addition, a parent communication link will be placed on the school's website.
  
- **My child is not computer literate. How can he/she be expected to use a computer?** Students will participate in training on how to utilize the web-based program [how to log on, sign into courses, communicate with teachers, check grades, follow guided practices (unit lessons & activities), complete assignments/assessments, check announcements,

schedule appointments with support staff, arrange for other support services, etc.]. Students will be required to participate in ongoing training throughout their assignment to the Alternative Virtual Academy.

- **What if my child needs help outside of the minimum six hour meeting time?** Each computer will have access to the Skype video communication application. This application allows students and teachers to talk face-to-face via the computer. In addition, ongoing support will be provided by teachers, counselors, and technology support specialists during face-to-face time. Additional face-to-face time can be adjusted based upon individual needs.
  
- **My child has an IEP. How can you assure me that the virtual school will meet my child's needs?** Additional face-to-face time as well as intense academic attention will be provided for students with disabilities by certified teachers and other staff in the Department of Exceptional Students. All services will be based on IEP requirements.
  
- **Will my child have a chance to take electives on the virtual platform?** Yes... The OdysseyWare Platform offers a variety of general electives.
  
- **How will students receive support from teachers?** Highly qualified teachers will provide individualized support for each student. Teachers and support personnel will: monitor student academic progress; schedule face-to-face instructional time; assign virtual learning activities based on academic needs; manage grade reports; and communicate with parents and students on an ongoing basis to enhance student learning.

The Alternative Virtual Academy will have the following staff positions to ensure the success of each student while they are enrolled in the non-traditional program:

- 8 core teachers (4 for middle; 4 for high) - English Language Arts, Math, Science, & Social Studies
- 2 teachers specifically to address IEP requirements (1 for middle; 1 for high)
- 1 reading teacher specifically to address literacy
- 1 psychologist specifically to address the socio-emotional needs of students
- 1 social worker specifically to address the socio-emotional needs of students
- 2 counselors

- **What charges or fees are associated with the virtual academy?** If a student has been assigned to the alternative program by way of a disciplinary tribunal, his/her access/participation in the virtual program will be at no cost—all supplies such as computers, computer bags, internet access, etc. will be provided free of charge.
  
- **Will my child receive transportation?** Transportation will be provided for all middle school students via assigned shuttle points. Parents/guardians will be responsible for getting students to and from assigned shuttle locations which will be: Forest Park High School, Riverdale High School. and Lovejoy High School.

High school students will not receive transportation services.