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### Guidelines for Online Courses

#### Rationale

The vision of the Lee County School System (LCSS) is “A School System with a Passion for Excellence and Distinction that promotes quality instruction, maximizes the potential for all learners and provides a safe learning environment. It is our belief that the utilization of technology will lead to increased success in post-secondary opportunities. Therefore, students in our system are encouraged to explore 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 Advanc- Ed 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, LCSS encourages students to consider an online option for either courses that are locally not available, or for courses in which students may believe there is an opportunity to be more successful 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.

*A school system with a drive for excellence and a passion for distinction*

3. Complete the **Enrollment Agreement** 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.

Students are encouraged to bring their own electronic devices in order to access online classes during the school day. Alternately, students with schedules that include an online class during the first or last period of the day AND who can provide their own transportation may be able to work from home during that period if they are approved for late-arrival and/or early-dismissal, allowing for more flexibility. LCSS cannot provide transportation if students elect 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. High school students must enroll in a full course load each semester, which may include one or more GaVS courses. Students must remain enrolled in all classes throughout the duration of the semester.
2. Once a student has completed the selection and approval process, and is enrolled in an online course, the student must complete the online course.
3. GaVS 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.
4. LCSS 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 and administrator before starting any course work. Courses taken from other providers without administrative approval will not be awarded credit. If approved, 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.