

# Gulf Shores Virtual Academy

## Grades 6-12

### Purpose

Gulf Shores Virtual Academy is designed to provide motivated, independent learners an opportunity to earn their Alabama High School Diploma through a flexible, personalized learning experience.

### Benefits

Virtual education offers students numerous benefits in terms of time, flexibility, and program customization. Along with these advantages, students also assume increased responsibility in time management, organization, self-direction, and self-regulation.

- Instruction from Alabama-certified teachers
- Accredited diploma upon satisfying all requirements for graduation, and the opportunity to participate in Gulf Shores High School graduation ceremony
- Flexible and personalized learning experiences
- Individualized academic and career preparation plan
- Self-pacing and opportunity for acceleration
- Opportunity for early graduation
- Flexibility with daily schedule
- Opportunity to blend virtual learning with face-to-face core and elective courses and tuition free dual enrollment classes
- Opportunity to take classes for advancement during the summer
- Opportunity to participate in sports, clubs, field trips, assemblies, and pep rallies
- Access to support services provided by school nurses, counselors, and the school lunch program

### Location

Gulf Shores Virtual Academy is located on the campuses of Gulf Shores Middle School (grades 6-8) and Gulf Shores High School (grades 9-12).

### Curriculum

The Gulf Shores Virtual Academy uses ACCESS Virtual Learning, a program administered by the Alabama State Department of Education. ACCESS includes standard courses, electives, and Advanced Placement classes. All course curricula are aligned to Alabama Courses of Study and taught by instructors certified by the Alabama State Department of Education. The majority of ACCESS courses have been approved by the NCAA. Gulf Shores Virtual Academy also offers locally developed online core and elective courses. Click [here](#) for high school *online* course offerings. Click [here](#) for middle school *online* course offerings.

Eligible high school students will have the opportunity to take 18 hours of tuition free dual enrollment classes at the Gulf Shores campus of [Coastal Alabama Community College](#) and one tuition free dual enrollment class at the [University of South Alabama](#) (*pending Board approval*). Online dual enrollment classes are available through Auburn University and the [University of Alabama](#) (*pending Board approval*).

In addition to online courses and dual enrollment classes, eligible students can take up to two face-to-face classes at Gulf Shores Middle School (grades 6-8) or Gulf Shores High School (grades 9-12). The face-to-face courses are offered in the areas of math, science, English, social studies, music/band, art, athletics, driver's education, and career and technical education. Click [here](#) for a list of middle school *face-to-face* courses. Click [here](#) for a list of high school *face-to-face* courses.

All students will take a minimum of 6 full courses/credits per year. At least 4 of the 6 courses will be in the core areas of math, science, history, and English.

### **Accommodations**

Students with an Individualized Education Plan, 504 Plan, or English Language Learner Plan will receive approved accommodations.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

Students enrolled in Gulf Shores Virtual Academy are eligible to apply for participation in school-sponsored extracurricular activities.

- Athletics
- Band
- Chorus
- ROTC
- Clubs
- Field Trips
- Assemblies
- Pep Rallies

### **Expectations for Attendance, Course Progression, and Minimum Grades**

Gulf Shores Virtual Academy students are expected to progress through their courses at a rate that is *at a minimum* comparable to similar face-to-face courses offered at Gulf Shores City Schools. Students are permitted to work ahead in their courses. In addition to adequate course progression, students are also expected to maintain at least a 70% average in each course. Course progression and academic achievement will be monitored frequently.

All students are encouraged to report to Gulf Shores Virtual Academy when they would like assistance with courses, technology, and college and career planning.

### **Academic Support and Additional Attendance Requirements**

Students who fall behind comparable course progress or who do not maintain at least a 70% overall average in each course will be required to participate in face-to-face Academic Support. Students participating in Academic Support will be required to meet with staff at Gulf Shores Virtual Academy to complete an Academic Support Plan. The plan will designate a specific number of days (2-5) per week and hours (3-7) per day that the student is required to report to Gulf Shores Virtual Academy for support and to complete online coursework. On school days that the student is not required to report to Gulf Shores Virtual Academy, the student will be expected to log in to his/her courses to complete assignments at home, and online attendance will be taken. Once a student has maintained comparable course progression as well as a 70 or higher in each of the core classes for two consecutive weeks, the student will no longer be required to participate in Academic Support.

## **Proctored Tests**

Students are required to take all unit tests and term examinations at Gulf Shores Virtual Academy in the physical presence of Gulf Shores Virtual Academy staff.

Gulf Shores Virtual Academy students are required to take all state-mandated assessments per the Gulf Shores City Schools' State Assessment Schedule at the designated school site.

## **Transportation**

Regular transportation to Gulf Shores Virtual Academy for required testing, meetings, academic support, and activities is provided by parents/guardians or by the licensed student per the signed Transportation Agreement. Click [here](#) for the Transportation Agreement.

Bus transportation is available for eligible students in the morning and afternoon according to the regular bus route schedule for Gulf Shores City Schools. It is expected that students who rely solely on bus transportation will remain on campus for the full school day. Typically, students report to campus two days per week to take proctored tests.

## **Technology**

Gulf Shores City Schools provides students with Chromebooks to use for their courses while enrolled in Gulf Shores Virtual Academy.

## **Grades and Credits**

Course grades and credits (including weights) will be assigned in accordance with the policies of ACCESS and the Gulf Shores City Board of Education.

## **Academic Integrity**

Students are required to sign a commitment form attesting to academic integrity regarding each of the following statements.

- All individual assignments and tests must be completed by the student.
- Any collaboration on individual assignments must be pre-approved by the teacher.
- Plagiarism will not be allowed in any form including copying or using the ideas or words of others and presenting them as one's own.
- Students will not allow others to copy their work.
- Students will take all tests under the supervision of an approved proctor.
- Content from the Internet will not be misused or misrepresented.

Teachers utilize a variety of technologies to check student work for authenticity. If it is determined that a student has not adhered to the academic integrity commitment, the student will be subject to a failing grade, removal from the course, and any other consequences determined by ACCESS Distance Learning administrative staff, the distance learning teacher, Gulf Shores Virtual Academy, and Gulf Shores City Schools. Click [here](#) for the Academic Integrity form.

# **Gulf Shores Virtual Academy**

## **Admission Requirements**

### **All Students**

- Reside in the Gulf Shores City Schools' district or obtain admission through the Non-Residency application process
- Meet all other requirements for enrollment for Gulf Shores City Schools
- Be a rising 6<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> grade student
- Have consistent, daily access to the Internet (minimum 1.5 mbs)
- Have reliable transportation to Gulf Shores Virtual Academy for testing and required meetings

### **Grades 6-9\***

- On grade level in reading and math
- Grade of 70 or higher in each of the four core subjects (math, science, English, social studies) from the previous academic year
- No more than one out of school suspension from the previous academic year

### **Grades 10-12\***

- On track for graduation
- Grade of 70 or higher in each of the four core subjects (math, science, English, social studies) from the previous academic year
- No more than one out of school suspension from the previous academic year

\* Students applying for admission after the school year has started will need to meet all admission requirements for the previous year and the current year.

### **Requirements to Remain Enrolled**

- Continue to maintain consistent, daily access to the Internet (minimum 1.5 mbs)
- Continue to maintain reliable transportation to Gulf Shores Virtual Academy for testing, required meetings, and academic support
- Continue to earn final grades of 70 or higher in each of the four core subjects
- Continue to remain on track for graduation
- No expulsions, and no more than one suspension
- Adhere to the Academic Integrity Contract
- Remain in good standing as a student of Gulf Shores City Schools by adhering to all expectations, procedures, and policies of the Gulf Shores City Schools, ACCESS, and the Alabama State Department of Education

### **Application for Enrollment**

Click [here](#) for the online application. A response will be emailed to you within two weeks of the submission of your application.