

Lee County Guidelines for Online Courses

last revised 8-4-26

Rationale

Students in our system are permitted to explore online learning opportunities available through the Georgia Virtual School (GaVS) program. The GaVS program provides the following description on their website:

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

In a cooperative effort with GaDOE and GaVS, LCSS permits students to take advantage of this online option for courses that are not available in the school district.

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 appropriate school counselor. Parents/guardians are required to participate in the discussion prior to the student's enrollment in an online GaVS course. Keep in mind that LCSS only permits students to take online GaVS courses for initial course credit if the desired course is not taught in the school district (*refer to #2 under "other considerations" for more details*). After verifying that the selected course meets the needs of the student's plan for graduation and/or CTAE pathway completion, the student and parent/guardian should assess whether the student is prepared for an online course through GaVS by:

1. Visiting the GaVS website (<http://www.gavirtualschool.org>) and reading the information carefully. Students should be acutely aware of schedules and deadlines pertaining to the selected courses. Information on the GaVS website may change as the semester progresses.
2. Familiarizing themselves with the GaVS program technical requirements. GaVS provides a document describing minimal requirements for GaVS courses on the website.

If the intent is to take an online GaVS course, complete the *Request for Online GaVS Course (included on the last page)* and return it to the appropriate school counselor by the stated deadline. After the request is processed by the appropriate school personnel, the student will be notified whether or not he/she may register for the desired online course.

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. 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 the school district prior to enrolling and beginning course work. The student will not be awarded credit for courses taken from other providers without prior approval. If courses taken through providers other than GaVS are approved, they will not be funded by the district. All associated costs for such courses will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.
2. LCSS only permits students to take online GaVS courses for initial course credit if the desired course is not taught



in the school district. The only exception to this is extenuating circumstances such as a student transferring into the district during the course of the school year from a block schedule resulting in course options at the school being limited. If it is in the best interest of the student, GaVS may be used for initial credit when extenuating circumstances arise if approved by the school principal. The request form should be completed and approved by the school principal at the time of scheduling the student in classes.

3. LCHS students must enroll in a full course load each semester (7 courses), which may include one or more GaVS courses. Beyond the full course load, students can earn initial credit for no more than 1 additional course through GaVS during the school year and no more than 1 additional course during the summer semester. A maximum of 2 additional credits can be earned per year through GaVS.
4. GaVS courses taken as part of the regular daily course load (7 courses) are eligible for district funding as long as the course requested is an advanced/accelerated course and not simply being taken as a preferred course (*i.e. want to take German rather than Spanish that is offered at LCHS*). Any course that is taken in addition to the regular course load, that is not an advanced/accelerated course, or that is taken during the summer months will not be funded by the district. All associated costs must be paid by the parent/guardian. The rate through December '26 is \$250.00 per 0.5 unit course and \$500.00 per 1.0 unit course. The cost will increase to \$350.00 and \$700.00 respectively as of January '27.
5. Students wishing to earn initial credit during the summer can enroll in GaVS courses if approved. Note the following stipulations for summer GaVS courses:
 - a. The student and parent/guardian are responsible for obtaining, completing and submitting the appropriate enrollment applications for GaVS. If required, the school official will sign the enrollment application. However, the school official's signature indicates only that the course applied for by the student will be accepted for credit.
 - b. LCHS will not accept more than a total of 1 credit per summer semester.
 - c. The student and parent/guardian should be aware of start dates. (*Note: This may differ from the LCHS school calendar.*)
 - d. The GaVS class is independent of Lee County and will not be taken on campus.
 - e. The student is responsible for notifying the school counselor if a GaVS course is dropped.
 - f. LCHS will not award honor weight to GaVS courses. Advanced Placement (AP) courses taken through GaVS will receive AP weighting. The final grade, regardless of pass/fail, will be added to the student's transcript. The school will not administer AP exams for AP courses that are taken through GaVS. Students will be responsible for finding their own testing center.
 - g. All costs for course instruction, books, and other materials are the responsibility of the student and/or the parent/guardian.
 - h. District employees are not responsible for providing technical and/or academic support. LCHS cannot navigate if grade issues arise during summer semester.
 - i. It is the responsibility of the student and parent/guardian to determine if the NCAA Clearinghouse accepts courses taken through GaVS.
6. In order to receive a high school diploma and participate in graduation ceremonies, the school must receive transcripts no later than the last day of school prior to final exams.
7. Students must remain enrolled in all GaVS classes throughout the duration of the semester in which they enroll. Once a student has completed the request and approval process and is enrolled in an online course, the student must complete the online course.



STUDENT REQUEST FORM FOR GaVS ONLINE COURSE FOR INITIAL CREDIT

This request to take a GaVS online course for initial course credit should be completed and submitted by the stated deadline below. LCSS only permits students to take online GaVS courses for initial course credit if the desired course is not taught in the school district. GaVS courses taken as part of the regular daily course load (7 courses) are eligible for district funding. Any course taken in addition to a regular schedule or during the summer months will not be funded by the district. All associated costs must be paid by the parent/guardian upon approval of this request form. (Rate info is included above in guidelines.)

DEADLINES FOR GaVS REQUESTS:

For 1st or 2nd Semester: February 15th

For Summer Semester: May 1st

New students submit the form at the time of scheduling classes, if applicable.

Student's Name: _____

Current Grade: _____

**Initial credit awarded for no more than 2 additional courses per year.*

Requested course name: _____

Requested course is: Regular 7 Course Load or Additional Course*

Course requested for: 1st Semester or 2nd Semester or Summer Semester

Requested course name: _____

Requested course is: Regular 7 Course Load or Additional Course*

Course requested for: 1st Semester or 2nd Semester or Summer Semester

Requested course name: _____

Requested course is: Regular 7 Course Load or Additional Course*

Course requested for: 1st Semester or 2nd Semester or Summer Semester

If an online course can be scheduled during 1st or 7th period, are you requesting late arrival and/or early dismissal?

Late Arrival and/or Early Dismissal (Note: Student must have transportation to request either.)

STUDENT/PARENT AGREEMENT: We have read and understand the *Lee County Guidelines for Online Courses*.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

RECOMMENDED BY:

School Counselor Signature

Date

Teacher Signature (N/A for new students)

Date

FOR COUNSELOR USE ONLY: Date Form Received: _____

Course(s) taught in the school district: Y or N

Total Fees Owed: _____

School Counselor's Initials: _____

Courses are: Regular Load or Additional

Date Fee Entered in Infinite Campus: _____

For New Students: If the course is taught in the school district, but is needed to stay "on track" provide details below:

FOR ADMINISTRATOR USE ONLY:

School Administrator Signature

Date

Request Approved: Y or N

Late Arrival Approved: Y or N or N/A

Early Dismissal Approved: Y or N or N/A

Form Returned to Counselor(copy to be given to student): _____

Date