



## **Florida Virtual School Full Time Welcomes “Mid-Year” Switching for Students Needing a New School Now**

**Orlando, FL (Jan. 11, 2016)** - As the new year begins, for some there is no avoiding one reality: their child is in need of a new school.

This might not be what parents wanted to concentrate on during the new year, but it's not uncommon. In Florida, some families are finding the switch to a free, public virtual school meets their needs.

“Changing to a virtual school is not just a change of venue, but a change of mindset,” said Florida Virtual School Full Time (FLVS FT) Kindergarten–8<sup>th</sup> grade Principal Marcie Trombino.

According to a Connections Academy (a partner of FLVS FT) Parent Satisfaction Survey, the top reasons for switching to virtual school are:

- The student requires or wants greater flexibility;
- The student wants a change from his or her local school; and
- The student wants a safe learning environment.

“Whatever the reason, the parent finds that his or her child is constantly talking about the need to change schools. It's important to listen to and respect the child's feelings, and provide reassurance,” said Principal Trombino. “Taking time to explore what options are out there and clear communications about what a school change will involve helps the transition.”

FLVS FT serves students in grades Kindergarten–12 and is currently accepting mid-year transfers.

More than a quarter of a million American students in grades Kindergarten–12 get their education virtually. In Florida, more than 5,000 students are currently enrolled in FLVS FT.

“The format of virtual schooling eases the student's adjustment period, and because learning takes place at home, the physical transition is also easier for students and families,” said Principal Trombino.

Principal Trombino suggests these tips for a mid-year transition:

**1. Do the homework.**

Make sure the school offers an accredited program with a wide range of courses and a proven curriculum developed by professional educators. Talk to parents with students currently enrolled in the school. FLVS FT offers a [Contact a Parent program](#) that connects prospective parents with currently enrolled families to discuss questions.

**2. Plan Ahead**

Research shows that students are more successful when they change schools at the beginning of a quarter or semester. Find out when the grading period ends in the child's current school and when the new one starts. Use this information to set a target start date for the new school. Of course, sometimes life throws a curve ball—like surprise job changes or family matters. In that case, guidance and enrollment officials can help families navigate the school switch smoothly.

**3. Get Paperwork in Order**

Check with enrollment officials at the new school for admission deadlines and a list of required documents, which could include:

- Application forms
- Transcripts
- Birth certificate
- Immunization records
- Other state-specific paperwork

**4. Pay Attention to Transfer Credits**

Many schools don't mail fall semester report cards until the spring semester, making it tricky for some parents to prove course completion and to get students' credits transferred to the new school. Parents facing this situation should check with their new school's enrollment counselors to find out what other, alternative paperwork they can supply, and then they should request it from the previous school.

**5. Maintain an Open Dialogue**

Easing a mid-year transition doesn't end once the child has all of his or her books and supplies and has started classes. Be sure to listen carefully and address the student's questions and concerns. Communicate with school staff regularly as teachers, counselors and administrators are there to help. Maintaining an open dialogue is key to a smooth transition to virtual school.

Families interested in making the mid-year switch should visit [FLVSFT.com](http://FLVSFT.com) for more information as well as updated online and in-person information session postings throughout the year.

**About Florida Virtual School Full Time (FLVS FT)**

After almost a decade of independent experience, Florida Virtual School and Connections Academy joined forces in 2008 to become FLVS FT. In 2011, FLVS FT began accepting students for full-time enrollment directly as their school of record, serving full-time students in grades Kindergarten–12 as public school students. Through this best-of-breed partnership, FLVS FT offers students a full-time virtual school with proven results. FLVS FT offers students statewide a high quality, highly accountable, tuition-free, public education option. FLVS FT delivers superior, personalized education for students, with the freedom and flexibility to experience its online learning community from anywhere. The combination of certified teachers, a proven curriculum, technology tools, and community experiences creates a supportive and successful online learning opportunity for families and students who want an individualized approach to education.

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