

Upson-Lee Virtual School (ULVS)

Grades 6-12



2021-2022

PARENT/STUDENT GUIDEBOOK

Excellence in education... every individual, every day

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Introduction

Thomaston-Upson County Schools (TUCS) takes pride in differentiating learning to help our students achieve. For the 2021-2022 school term, we are offering students in grades 6-12 an option of virtual learning. Virtual learning provides 24/7 access to courses via the Internet and a flexible schedule for assignment completion. Students eligible for the virtual learning option will use Edgenuity, a customized virtual learning platform that addresses the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) and is tailored by TUCS to meet students' diverse needs. Like other TUCS schools, at ULVS, teachers and parents will work collaboratively to guide students to success in core academic subjects and a wide variety of elective courses. In addition, Edgenuity provides an option for virtual tutors to facilitate learning.

To learn more about ULVS, please review the information below, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), or contact the following:

- Grades 6-8 - Mrs. Karen Knight, 706-647-6256, Upson-Lee Middle School
- Grades 9-12 - Mr. Ricky English, 706-647-8171, Upson-Lee High School

Academic Calendar

Virtual students will follow the Thomaston-Upson County School System Academic Calendar. You can always find this calendar on the district website (<http://www.upson.k12.ga.us/>) under the "Quick Links" section.

Student Breaks and Holidays

Virtual students will not have assignment due dates on any district-designated holiday or break. However, students are more than welcome to continue working during those breaks to catch up or get ahead in any of their classes.

In the event of an emergency school campus closing, virtual students are expected to continue coursework as scheduled unless otherwise notified. Virtual activity is also not affected by teacher holidays.

Attendance Policy

Establish your routine!

ULVS Attendance is primarily determined by course activity, assignment completion, and course progress (meeting assigned due dates). Student progress in virtual courses will be checked at the end of each week. If a student has met all of their assignment due dates for that week, the student will be counted present.

If a student is not able to meet all weekly due dates, ULVS facilitators will review the total amount of time a student spends in each class per week. ULVS students are expected to spend approximately one (1) hour per course per day. If a student fails to meet the required weekly time per course and assessment deadlines, he/she will be marked absent in the appropriate course.

Students who fail to log ANY active time on a given week will be marked absent for the full week and will be placed on academic probation. Students placed on academic probation are at risk of being removed from the program (see Probation / Mandatory Return On-Campus Learning below).

If a student does not meet all weekly due dates, the student must complete a minimum of 25 hours of course engagement (this does not include idle time).

Assessment Requirements

Taking a Quiz, Test, or Exam

All ULVS quizzes, tests, and assessments occur within the Edgenuity platform.

Passing Thresholds

Each assessment requires that students meet a passing threshold of at least 70% to continue moving forward without intervention from the home school.

Revise/Retake Policy

If a student fails to meet the passing threshold for assessments, they are offered two attempts to retake the assessment. If both attempts are unsuccessful, students will need to schedule a time to work with their designated facilitator to review the assessed content and receive tutoring during the afterschool times listed above under Office/Support Hours. If the student fails to meet the threshold after subsequent attempts, the grade will be recorded as posted, and the student will be forced to continue on with the course.

Milestone Assessments

State-mandated Milestone exams are administered at the end of the school year for students in grades 6-8 and at the end of each semester for High School students who are enrolled in a Milestone Course. Please see the chart below regarding information about which grades or classes require completion of a Milestone exam.

Milestones Course	ELA	Math	Science	Social Studies
End of Grade (EOG)	Grades 6-8	Grades 6-8	Grade 8	Grade 8
End of Course (EOC)	American Literature	Algebra I	Biology	U.S. history

All virtual students who are in a Milestone course are required to take their exam on campus at their home school. Examination times and schedules will be provided to students and parents as soon as they are available. Students are expected to follow the district dress code while present on campus.

NOTE: High School Milestone exam grades count for 20% of the final grade of that course.

NWEA MAP Assessments

ULVS students will be required to come on campus to take the NWEA MAP Growth assessments. Examination times and schedules will be provided to students and parents as soon as they are available.

NWEA	ELA	Reading	Math
MAP Growth	Grades 6-10	Grades 6-10	Grades 6-10

Continuation Policy

With flexible scheduling comes great responsibility!

TUCS understands that virtual learning is an attractive opportunity for many students and families; however, it is also a different style of learning that may not be best suited for all students. Virtual learning requires participation in grade-level core curriculum, active engagement, and independent work.

In order to facilitate student success and prevent on-going failure or credit deficiency, ULVS facilitators monitor student grades, progress, activity, engagement, and attendance. If academic struggles and attendance concerns arise, ULVS facilitators will communicate with students and parents to provide interventions and develop a plan to get students back on track; however,

even with continued support and modifications, virtual learning is not the best environment for all students.

Students who continue to struggle to meet the minimum academic, attendance, or engagement thresholds will be removed from the program. Students who are removed from the program are ineligible to reenter the program for one full school year. In order to reapply for ULVS, students must demonstrate evidence of academic improvement in the on-campus environment.

Continued enrollment at ULVS is contingent upon course completion and Edgenuity grades at specific checkpoints each semester. ULVS facilitators and students will use Edgenuity's *Actual Grade* to determine grades at the checkpoints.

Actual Grade Checkpoints

- ☐ Section A
 - ☐ 4.5 Week - 50% complete with section A and a grade 70 or higher
 - ☐ 9.0 Week - 100% complete with Section A and a grade 70 or higher
- ☐ Section B
 - ☐ 4.5 Week - 50% complete with section B and a grade 70 or higher
 - ☐ 9.0 Week - 100% complete with Section B and a grade 70 or higher

Probation / Mandatory Return On-Campus Learning

- ☐ ULVS students will be placed on probation for failure to meet either academic OR attendance requirements. To prevent on-going failure, students may be placed on probation earlier than the checkpoints specified above; however, student success and participation in virtual learning will be formally evaluated at each checkpoint to determine whether probation is appropriate.
 - ☐ If a student is placed on probation, he/she will be required to attend face-to-face, after-school sessions for academic/attendance support. Once the student remedies the academic/attendance concerns, the ULMS/ULHS principal or designee will determine if face-to-face support sessions should continue.
- ☐ A student placed on probation must correct the identified area(s) of concern prior to the next checkpoint. If the student does not correct the identified area(s) prior to the next checkpoint, the student will be required to return to face-to-face instruction and cannot apply for the virtual learning option again for one calendar year.

Curriculum

TUCS' virtual learning program and the Edgenuity platform enable students to take ownership of their learning. Students and parents can adapt the learning schedule to meet their needs; however, minimum daily time requirements must be met (see Attendance Policy). Self-paced learning and pretesting allow students to spend more time on what they need and less time on content they've already mastered.

Edgenuity, one of the leading courseware providers in the country, is grounded in research and aligned to the Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE). Courses combine direct-instruction videos featuring expert, on-screen teachers with rigorous assignments, performance tasks, and assessments to engage students and ensure subject-area mastery. Edgenuity provides a wide range of academic course options, including core curriculum, world languages, general electives, Advanced Placement (AP) and Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) courses.

The Edgenuity curriculum and pacing guide is modified by ULMS and ULHS to mirror the curriculum offered in on-campus academic and elective courses.

Like on-campus ULMS students, ULVS students in grades 6-8 participate in courses that span the entire school year. Courses are broken into two sections, A and B. Section A covers the first semester content (August - December), and section B covers the second semester content (January - May). Grades for these courses are determined entirely by student performance in Edgenuity. A student's yearly average is calculated by averaging the two final scores from each section.

Like on-campus ULHS students, students in grades 9-12 participate in courses that span only one semester. These courses are broken up into two sections, A and B. Section A covers the first nine weeks of the semester, and section B covers the second nine weeks of the semester. Each course section is worth 40% of that course's overall grade. The final 20% of the student grade comes from their final exam or Milestone test score.

A course taken through Edgenuity via ULVS is **not** considered an Honors course (including Advanced Placement); therefore, courses taken through Edgenuity do not meet the requirements to be considered a Knight of Distinction, Salutatorian, nor Valedictorian.

Students in grades 9-12 who are interested in taking Advanced Placement courses need to speak with the facilitator at each school. Advanced Placement courses are through Georgia Virtual School (GAVS) and would be based on availability.

Students in grades 9-12 participating in ULVS are eligible to participate in the dual enrollment (DE) program; however, the student must meet eligibility requirements for the DE program and be approved by a ULHS committee at the time of acceptance into ULVS.

A student enrolled in Upson-Lee Virtual School is not eligible to participate in Work-Based Learning (WBL).

Course List

Students in grades 6-8 will take Math, English- Language Arts for the year. Science and Social Studies classes will be a semester long course. Virtual students will be assigned 2 year-long connection classes.

6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade	Connections
Language Arts	Language Arts	Language Arts or 9th Grade Literature for HS Credit	Health/PE Art AgScience Technology Careers
Science	Science	Science or Physical Science for HS Credit	
Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies	
Math or 6th grade Accelerated Math (all of 6th grade curriculum and the first half of 7th)	Math or 7th grade Accelerated Math (all of 7th grade curriculum and the first half of 8th)	Math or Algebra I for HS Credit (In order to take Algebra I, the student must have successfully completed the Accelerated Math in 6th and 7th grades)6th grade Accelerated Math (all of 6th grade curriculum and the first half of 7th)	

Grades 9-12	
ELA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ninth Grade Literature • Advanced Composition • American Literature • English Literature • Advanced Placement English Language & Composition (GAVS) • Advanced Placement English Literature & Composition (GAVS)
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Algebra I

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Geometry ● Algebra II ● College Readiness Mathematics ● Mathematics of Finance ● Pre-Calculus
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Environmental Science ● Biology ● Physical Science ● Earth Systems ● Chemistry ● Physics ● Advanced Placement Biology (GAVS) ● Advanced Placement Environmental Science (GAVS)
History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● World History ● American Government ● United States History ● Economics ● Advanced Placement Government & Politics (GAVS) ● Advanced Placement US History (GAVS) ● Advanced Placement Economics (GAVS)
Foreign Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Spanish I ● Spanish II
Career and Technical Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Personal Fitness/Health ● Financial Literacy ● Food, Nutrition, and Wellness ● Foundations of Engineering and Technology ● Art Appreciation ● Essentials of Healthcare ● Introduction to Business and Technology ● Introduction to Healthcare Science ● Introduction to Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources ● Introduction to Careers in Government and Public Administration ● Introduction to Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security

Eligibility

Eligibility for ULVS requires approval from a panel of educators and administrators from each home school. Students are eligible for enrollment based on meeting the enrollment deadline, the grade-level criteria listed below, and acceptance by the committee.

To be eligible for ULVS, students must:

- ☐ Be currently enrolled in TUCS (see enrollment/registration information above).
- ☐ Meet ULVS registration deadlines (2021-2022 School Year - June 3, 2021).
- ☐ Meet district and ULMS/ULHS academic and attendance requirements.
- ☐ Obtain acceptance from a ULMS or ULHS panel.

***Medical documentation will not be considered as a part of the ULVS enrollment process. For any medical situations, please contact the school counselor to inquire about Hospital Homebound Services.**

Enrollment

ULVS students must be enrolled at Upson-Lee Middle School (ULMS) or Upson-Lee High School (ULHS). Students who are not enrolled at ULMS or ULHS can register online via the registration process on the district website (<http://www.upson.k12.ga.us/>). Once students are registered, parents/guardians must complete the ULVS application located on the homepage of the Thomaston-Upson County Schools' website (see Upson-Lee Virtual School link). **The deadline for applications will be June 3, 2021.**

Important Enrollment Dates

- ☐ Application Available - May 6, 2021
- ☐ **Application Deadline - June 3, 2021**
- ☐ Acceptance Notification - on or before June 10, 2021
- ☐ Parent Commitment Deadline - June 17, 2021

Please note: Students currently enrolled in Upson-Lee Alternative School are **not** eligible for enrollment.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Eligibility for participation in Georgia High School Association (GHSA) sanctioned activities will be determined by the requirements listed in the 2021-22 GHSA Constitution and By-laws. A student enrolled in virtual learning can participate in GHSA sanctioned activities. The GHSA has the authority to change the GHSA Constitution and By-laws as necessary to meet the needs of

its member schools.

ULVS students are not eligible to be a member of NJROTC or NJROTC Competitive teams due to NJROTC regulations. According to NJROTC regulations, students must be an active cadet to participate in NJROTC programs.

ULVS students cannot participate in school-sponsored activities, school-sponsored clubs, non-GHSA school competitions, or Fine Arts (drama, chorus, and band) **during the school day**; however, ULVS students are eligible to participate in the above-mentioned activities and clubs after school hours. ULVS students can join or remain a member of a ULMS/ULHS club or organization; however, the student cannot participate in club or organization meetings **during the school day**.

Grade Specific Criteria

Grades 6-8

In order to be considered for ULVS, students currently enrolled in grades 6-8 must meet, at a minimum, the criteria specified below:

- ☐ A student must be in good academic standing.
 - ☐ Must pass all classes (academics and connections) in the previous school.
 - ☐ Must score above the 20th percentile on the MAP test in each content area in the prior year or prior to the registration deadline. *(If MAP Test proficiency above the 20th percentile is required for ULVS eligibility, the student must take the test on campus.)*
- ☐ A student must have a history of good attendance based on the previous year or semester attendance record prior to applying to the virtual learning option. Good attendance is defined as not being truant (Attendance Support Team referral for 10 or more unexcused absences) nor dropped for lack of attendance (10 consecutive unexcused absences) from the Thomaston-Upson School System.

Grades 9-12

In order to be considered for ULVS, students currently enrolled in grades 9-12 must meet, at a minimum, the criteria specified below:

- ☐ A student must be in good academic standing. Good academic standing is defined as earning the appropriate number of credits outlined below:
 - ☐ Grade 8 to Grade 9: Passed all courses (Academics & Connections)

- ☐ Grade 9 to Grade 10: 7 credits
- ☐ Grade 10 to 11: 14 credits
- ☐ Grade 11 to 12: 20 credits
- ☐ Grades 9 and 10 must score above the 20th percentile on the MAP test in each content area in the prior year or prior to the registration deadline. *(If MAP Test proficiency above the 20th percentile is required for ULVS eligibility, the student must take the test on campus.)*
- ☐ A student who is not on track for graduation would not be considered to be in good academic standing. A student who is not on track for graduation can be defined as a student who is credit deficient compared to their peers.
- ☐ A student must have a history of good attendance based on the previous year or semester attendance record prior to applying to the virtual learning option. Good attendance is defined as not being truant (Attendance Support Team referral for 10 or more unexcused absences) nor dropped for lack of attendance (10 consecutive unexcused absences) from the Thomaston-Upson School System.

Office/Support Hours

Grades 6-8

Monday – Friday: 8:20 AM – 3:10 PM

- ☐ Parents and students can contact Mrs. Karen Knight at 706-647-6256 with any questions.

Monday & Thursday: 3:30 PM – 5:30 PM

- ☐ Face to Face Tutoring - Virtual learning students will have access to a face-to-face teacher for assistance with their Edgenuity courses.

Grades 9-12

Monday - Friday : 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM

- ☐ Parents and students can contact Mr. Ricky English, 706-647-8171 with any questions.

Monday, Tuesday, & Thursday: 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

- ☐ Virtual learning students will have access to a face-to-face teacher for assistance with their Edgenuity courses.

Orientation

A mandatory orientation will be held at the beginning of the school year at each home school. The student and a parent will be required to attend. The date and time will be communicated

to students at the beginning of the year.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents, you are a very important part of our team!

“The most accurate predictor of student achievement in school is not family income or social status, but the extent to which the family creates a home environment that encourages learning, communicates high yet reasonable expectations for the child’s achievement, and becomes involved in the child’s education at school.”¹

TUCS believes that success in the virtual learning program is dependent on parents or responsible adults monitoring student progress and daily activity. Parents should contact each home school contact included in this document to get signed up for notifications from Edgenuity.

Monitoring Student Progress

It is imperative that a parent regularly check that students are successfully reaching the following goals:

- Completing all assignments on or before their due dates.
- Communicating with their facilitator when they have questions or need support.
- Completing student progress conversations with facilitators in a timely manner at each quarterly interval.

¹ National PTA. 2000. *Building Successful Partnerships: A Guide for Developing Parent and Family Involvement Programs*. Bloomington, Indiana: National Education Service, 11–12.

Daily Supervision

TUCS requires assurance that children, based on their age, not be left home alone. A parent may opt to “work” with the child outside the normal school day hours; however, this does not negate daytime supervision by an appropriate aged, responsible adult. Please confirm your student, based on Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) guidelines, will be supervised by a responsible adult should you choose the virtual option for your student.

Promotion and Retention

Please review the district policies for promotion and retention located in each school’s student handbook.

Promotion Requirements for ALL Students in Grades 6-8

- “Passing” a class requires a minimum final grade of 70% or higher.
- Students who fail a core course may be promoted pending Milestone assessments or administrative review.
- Students who fail two core courses will need to complete a summer learning opportunity to be considered for promotion. These opportunities will be determined by the home school.
- Students who fail three or more core courses will not be promoted to the next grade level.
- Students who fail all four core courses will not be promoted to the next grade level.

Promotion Requirements for All Students in Grades 9-12

- “Passing” a class requires a minimum final grade of 70% or higher.
- Students who fail a class with a final average between 62-69 may complete an appropriately rigorous summer learning activity to recover the credit. This can only be done for ONE class per semester.
- Students who fail two or more of their classes in a semester will be removed from the program.
- SENIORS will be removed from the program pending administrative decision if ONE class is failed.

Teachers are not expected nor required to video conference with students at any point. At their own volition, the teacher can choose to video conference with students to provide academic support.

Student Handbooks

ULVS students will follow all rules, procedures, guidelines, and Code of Conduct in the home school Student Handbook. This Student Handbook will be given to parents/students at orientation.

Students with a Current Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan

ULVS eligibility for students with a current IEP or Section 504 Plan will occur in three phases:

- ☐ The student must meet district and grade-specific ULVS eligibility requirements as mentioned above.

- ❑ If the student is eligible based on general requirements, an IEP and/or Section 504 Team, which includes the parent/guardian and required team members, must convene to determine if the change of placement (e.g., virtual learning environment) will provide the student with a free, appropriate public education (FAPE). When considering if the virtual learning environment can provide FAPE, the team will review the current eligibility, IEP goals, services, and supports, and IEP progress reports to determine if the change in placement will facilitate academic progress and educational benefit.
- ❑ If the student is eligible based on general requirements **AND** the team determines that FAPE can be provided through the virtual learning environment, the IEP or Section 504 Plan should be amended to address the change of placement (i.e., shift from on-campus to virtual learning services). The team should specifically address the services, supports, and accommodations required for the student to be successful in the virtual learning environment.

Students that receive speech/language services or a related service such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, hearing impaired instruction, visually impaired instruction, or mobility orientation must come to the appropriate school campus at the previously scheduled service day/time to receive services.

Technology

Students will be provided a Chromebook. Chromebooks will be checked out through the homeschool media center. Chromebook checkout times will be posted through various media sources. Students and parents are responsible for Internet access for virtual learning.