

# **Upson-Lee Virtual School (ULVS) - Grades 6-12**

## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

### **What is Upson-Lee Virtual School (ULVS)?**

Thomaston-Upson County Schools (TUCS) virtual learning program is designed to provide students with an opportunity to engage in a virtual learning environment that does not require a physical presence in a traditional school setting.

### **How do I apply for Virtual Learning?**

The application can be found on the TUCS Webpage (<http://www.upson.k12.ga.us/>).

### **What is the application timeline?**

- Application Available - May 6, 2021
- Application Deadline - June 3, 2021
- Students and parents will be notified of acceptance on June 10, 2021.
- Deadline for the parent to accept the decision for their child to attend virtual learning June 17, 2021.

### **What commitment is required for students to participate?**

TUCS requires families to commit to virtual learning for a calendar year, unless dismissed from the program due to failure to meet academic or attendance requirements. If students choose to return to the home school at the end of a semester, we will happily assist with the transition.

### **Will an orientation be held for parents and students?**

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.

### **How do I know if virtual learning is the right option for my child?**

Key characteristics for successful virtual learning include:

- Prior success in on-campus learning
- Mastery of grade-level curriculum
- Good time management skills
- Effective communication
- Independent study habits
- Self-motivation
- Academic readiness

**What if my child did not participate in taking the MAP Assessment?**

Students will be scheduled a time to go to their home school prior to the deadline in order to take all 3 MAP Growth assessments. These assessments must be taken at the home school and will require the student to attend for 3 separate dates for approximately 1.5 to 2 hours each assessment.

**What does instruction in your courses look like?**

Students will use Edgenuity to access their courses on a daily basis in conjunction with other educational technology programs.

The curriculum has been designed to be \*asynchronous and flexible in nature while providing the structural organization of a traditional classroom. In our virtual format, time and location constraints are lifted for students, while coursework deadlines are clearly communicated and must be upheld for students to achieve maximum academic success. As long as students are completing assignments by the defined due date in their courses, their work can be completed any time, from anywhere!

\*asynchronous- Course format that does NOT require students to access meetings, lessons, course content, etc., at a defined time.

In addition, our courses are designed to be interactive, using the latest educational technology resources to promote engagement and a positive learning environment.

**Does Upson-Lee Virtual School offer advanced courses for Middle School Students?**

See list of courses offered above

**What is the School Calendar?**

VirtualLearning mirrors the yearly approved school calendar published by TUCS.

**Can my student take AP courses via Virtual Learning?**

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 and would be based on availability.

**Will my student be able to participate in athletics and activities?**

Yes, because ULVS is a supplemental program for students, even though a student may be enrolled as a full-time virtual student, he/she still has full access to their home school facilities,

activities, and extracurriculars. \*To participate, students must meet all requirements set by each respective program.

**What is the cost to attend Upson-Lee Virtual School?**

There is no cost to attend Upson-Lee Virtual School.

**What is considered a student's "home" school?**

If a student is enrolled full-time for virtual learning, Upson-Lee Middle School or Upson-Lee High School will be considered his/her "home" school.

**Are virtual courses harder or easier than face-to-face courses?**

Courses are developed using the GaDOE standards; therefore, they will reflect traditional content presented during face-to-face instruction. Successful students will possess these characteristics:

- Good time management
- Effective communication
- Independent study habits
- Self-motivation
- Academic readiness

**What Courses Are Offered?**

Please see the course lists for Grades 6-12 in the Upson-Lee Virtual School Guidebook.

**Will technology be provided for students?**

A Chromebook will be provided to each student from the home school. We expect the students to have reliable internet access to complete their coursework.

**Is Virtual Learning the same as homeschooling?**

Students enrolled in Virtual Learning do their learning at home, but they enrolled and are considered to be active students of Thomaston-Upson County School System. The curriculum used is approved by the school system and the State of Georgia for earning middle and high school credits that can lead to a high school diploma.

**What kind of diploma will my child receive after completing Virtual Learning?**

Students who complete all the requirements for graduation will receive a high school diploma from Upson-Lee High School.

**My child has an IEP and has been enrolled in Special Education. Does Virtual Learning enroll students with special needs?**

Yes, as a public school, we accept students with disabilities. The main issue to be considered is whether or not the independent nature of virtual instruction will be the best fit for a student. This decision should be made as an IEP Team to ensure that all necessary supports are in place to ensure academic success for students.

**How do I get help if I am having difficulty with my course(s)?**

Edgenuity provides a chat option for assistance with courses. This concept coach can be reached only through the chat feature in Edgenuity. ULMS and ULHS offer face to face after school tutoring for students as well as a contact person at each school.

- 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

**How will attendance and progress be monitored?**

Student attendance and progress are measured by student engagement and progress in his/her courses and timely assignment completion. The expectation is that students spend approximately one hour per course per week.

**Do I have to be at home all the time my child is doing schoolwork?**

That is not required; however, it is important for children to know that parents are interested in their school work. It is unrealistic for most school-aged students to handle the total responsibility of a virtual learning environment without any parental intervention. ULVS does not require students to do all of their coursework during traditional school hours, so it may be beneficial for some families to schedule some of their "school time" during hours that parents are home to provide support.

**What kinds of safeguards are in place to keep my child safe while working on the internet?**

Good parental supervision and setting some guidelines for internet use that match your family values will go a long way in protecting your children from unwanted information on the internet. Students attending ULVS must comply with the Responsible Use Policy for Students.

**Is high-speed internet access necessary to participate in Virtual Learning?**

Yes, high-speed internet access is required for students to be able to access and complete their coursework.

**Are there requirements for a student computer?**

Having access to a reliable device is absolutely necessary for students to be successful in the virtual environment. Although tablets and phones can be used to access most virtual content, it is highly recommended that students have access to a computer (Chromebook, PC, Mac) to ensure full access to all assignments posted by instructors. If your student does not have access to a reliable device, please reach out to the Upson-Lee Virtual School contacts listed above for potential options.

**Can a virtual student transfer back to a traditional campus during the school year?**

We recommend that a virtual student commits to at least one school year; however, a student may elect to transfer to a traditional setting at the end of a semester. This is not highly recommended, because of the various support students will receive to help them be successful virtually.

**As a parent, how can I check on my son/daughter's progress in Upson-Lee Virtual School?**

Parents will have access to Edgenuity to view student grades, progress, daily engagement, and assessments. Infinite Campus Parent Portal is available for scheduling, attendance, and final grades.