



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Florida Virtual School® Celebrates 20 Year Anniversary**

**Orlando, Fla. (Aug. 1, 2017)** – The 20-year anniversary of Florida Virtual School (FLVS) is not only a milestone for the first statewide Internet-based school in the United States, but is also a time capsule for virtual education. FLVS, which is known as a pioneer in the online education field, has grown considerably in size and impact since its inception.

When founded in 1997, FLVS consisted of six teachers, four personnel members, 77 enrollments, and six courses. The use of online education tools were still new for the high schoolers of 1997. That initial small group of faculty and staff served in multiple roles at once, often acting as teacher, community liaison, course developer, and even legislative developer. As cellphones and e-mails were not yet the primary use of communication in 1997, most of the staff relied on beepers and phone booths to speak to others while out in the field.

Networking with potential students looked quite different than it does today, often taking place at lemonade stands at local high schools in order to spread the word about the new virtual school.

Today, FLVS employs more than 1,400 Florida certified instructors who are all provided with a wide variety of resources and professional development opportunities. Today, FLVS students are digital natives and benefit from more than 150 courses and boasts 3.6 million semester completions since its inception in 1997.

In addition to working directly with students, the FLVS footprint has grown beyond state lines, providing its courseware experience to online and blended learning programs in schools and districts across the nation.

“From the beginning, FLVS has always put the students first, and I am proud to say that this is still our number one priority today,” said Dr. Jodi Marshall, FLVS president and CEO. “I couldn’t be more thrilled to be part of the amazing 20-year journey of FLVS. The changes made over the past two decades have been innovative and exciting, and I am beyond appreciative of our faculty and staff.”

One staff member in particular can speak to the incredible growth of the school. Jennifer Whiting is the Chief Technology Innovation Officer for FLVS and an original employee who has been there since the beginning. She recently wrote a [blog](#) post about her 20-year journey.

“My loyalty to this organization is so high, that I cannot imagine leaving. I intend to retire from here in a few years, but my devotion to what we have built here will never end,” said Whiting. “It is an amazing legacy to leave behind us, and watching FLVS grow and mature has been a shining point of my life.”

To learn more about 20 years of education innovation at FLVS, please visit [flvs.net/20-years](http://flvs.net/20-years).

FLORIDA VIRTUAL SCHOOL

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***About Florida Virtual School***

[Florida Virtual School® \(FLVS®\)](http://www.flvs.net) is a fully accredited, statewide public school district offering more than 150 courses to Kindergarten-12 students. Its certified teachers use a variety of personalized instructional programs to create individualized educational plans for every student. Since 1997, FLVS students have successfully completed more than 3.6 million semester enrollments. FLVS also provides its courseware and expertise to online and blended learning programs across the nation. Services include content licensing, FLVS Global School, District Virtual Schools, digital learning labs, and professional development. As a not-for-profit, FLVS reinvests revenue into the development of new educational technologies and the creation of the highest-quality courses, benefiting students in Florida and beyond. To learn more, visit [www.flvs.net](http://www.flvs.net).

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