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Dear Middle/High School Parent or Guardian,

Welcome to the 2018-2019 school year! I hope you had a wonderful summer. I am writing not only to welcome you to the new school year, but also to remind you of Program of Choice opportunities as well as resources available on the district website.

Programs of choice include career academies, advanced academic programs, virtual school options, Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps and the arts. For most programs, the application process will start January 18, 2019 and end February 8, 2019 for the 2018-2019 school year. More information is available at <https://academies.stjohns.k12.fl.us/programs/>. It is never too early to begin consideration of your child's future educational goals.

Part-time virtual school options are available either during the regular school day or after school and in the summer. After school begins, requests for part-time virtual courses taken within the regular school day will be addressed through the normal drop/add policy of a school with the principal having final authority for all schedule changes. All virtual course requests must be approved by a guidance counselor. The next open enrollment periods to apply for St. Johns Virtual School as a full-time student are November 16, 2018 - January 4, 2019, and in the spring, April 12, 2019 to July 11, 2019. To learn about all virtual options, please go to <http://www-sjvs.stjohns.k12.fl.us> or call 904-547-8080.

Regular high school graduation requirements now include the successful completion of one high school level online course. There are three ways to meet this requirement: An online course (virtual), a blended course, or earn industry certification in information technology as identified by the state. St. Johns Virtual School and FLVS provide online courses. Blended courses provide instruction delivered by both online/digital resources and the classroom teacher. Check with your school regarding blended course opportunities. Students achieve industry certification by earning a passing score on an industry certification assessment. Students may pursue industry certification by taking information technology courses at their school, which include administration of the assessment, or independent of school based coursework by scheduling for the assessment via the guidance department at their school.

In addition to programs of choice and virtual courses, all St. Johns County schools offer Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning (ACCEL) options, which looks different at each level. Options include but are not limited to:

- Middle – high school courses in middle school; virtual instruction in a higher grade-level course; qualifying students may even participate at no cost to them in Dual Enrollment with St. Johns River State College. ACCEL options do not supersede the core course requirements for promotion to high school (three English language arts, three math, three science, and three social studies) but courses taken in middle school may earn high school credit
- High – college credit via Advanced Placement (AP), Advanced International Certificate of Education or International Baccalaureate exams; Dual Enrollment courses

*The St. Johns County School District will inspire good character and a passion for lifelong learning in all students, creating educated and caring contributors to the world.*

- Qualifying students participate at no charge for St. Johns River State College courses that meet high school graduation requirements and also earn college credit at the same time. Students may also receive high school credit by passing the state End-of-Course (EOC) assessments for selected courses; virtual instruction in advanced courses; early graduation; earn college credit by passing the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) assessment for a college course or an AP exam without actually being enrolled in the course

As you consider an academic path keep in mind that there are several diploma options. Designations are dependent upon a student's course of study. Details regarding the criteria for each option and graduation requirements by cohort year are available at <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/graduation-requirements>.

Your planning should also include post-high school goals. After high school, your child may qualify for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program. To find out how your child can qualify for a Bright Futures Scholarship go to <http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/bf/>.

Admission into Florida's State University System is competitive so prospective students should complete a rigorous curriculum in middle and high school. Eligibility requirements are available at <http://www.flbog.edu/forstudents/planning/>.

The Florida College System includes 28 state colleges. These institutions offer career-related certificates and two-year associate degrees that prepare students to transfer to a bachelor's degree program or to enter jobs requiring specific skills. More information is available at <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/higher-ed/fl-college-system/index.shtml>.

Florida also offers students 46 accredited career and technical centers throughout the state, which provide the education and certification necessary to work in a particular career or technical field. More information is available at <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/>.

This is a great deal of information to consider, so as you plan one of the first places you may wish to visit is the district Parent Resource Guide, <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/families/resource/>, and the Student Progression Plan, <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/cs/spp/>. These user-friendly tools may promote a better understanding of the options open to your student. In addition, you can access district approved instructional materials at <http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us/media/approved-instructional-materials/>.

I am proud that our schools offer so many academic choices for our students. Regardless of whether a student wishes to attend university, join the military, go directly into a career after high school or some combination of these options, St. Johns County School District has programs to support those goals. With so many good options to consider, I hope that you will work with your school's guidance department to develop the best learning path for your child.

Thank you for your consideration of this information and my best wishes to you and your family for an outstanding school year!

Sincerely,



Tim Forson  
Superintendent of Schools