



## **Guidance to School Districts Affected by Hurricane Michael October 18, 2018**

As a result of the devastating effects of Hurricane Michael, students and families are relocating to other locations. Due to the destruction left in the wake of this record-setting storm, some of these families may not have immediate access to the records that are typically required to enroll in school. This document is a compilation of guidance to support this transition. School district personnel should direct questions to the contacts for each section listed below.

### **I. Homeless Student Identification**

Contact: Skip Forsyth, Director, Homeless Education  
Program Bureau of Federal Educational Programs  
[Skip.Forsyth@fldoe.org](mailto:Skip.Forsyth@fldoe.org)  
850-245-0089

#### **1. How are schools to determine if a displaced student is also homeless?**

For all displaced children and youth, apply federal McKinney-Vento Act (MVA) criteria as you would for any student that may be experiencing homelessness. Ask all parents/guardians who are enrolling students to complete the district's Student Housing Questionnaire (it may have another name in some districts). Consult with the district's designated Homeless Liaison for assistance. For contact information, go to <https://web01.fldoe.org/FederalProgramDirectory/Default>, scroll down to select Title X Homeless Contacts, select a district, and click Submit.

#### **2. How are displaced enrollees to be coded in the data system?**

For MVA-eligible hurricane-displaced students, complete the following data elements:

- Data Element #129525, Homeless Student, PK-12: as indicated
- Data Element #130275, Homeless Unaccompanied Youth: as indicated
- Data Element #129150, Homeless Cause: select H – Natural Disaster-Hurricane
- Data Element #131545, Disaster Affected Student: select Y – Yes, this student moved to this district this school year due to a hurricane

For hurricane-displaced students who are NOT MVA-eligible, complete the following data element:

- Data Element #131545, Disaster Affected Student: select Y – Yes, this student moved to this district this school year due to a hurricane

For all hurricane-displaced students who are coming from another state or territory, complete the following data element:

- Data Element 163166, Prior School/Location: State/Territory or Commonwealth: enter the standard two-character code for the state, territory or commonwealth.



## II. Immunization Verification

Contact: Robert M. Griffin, Administrator, Immunization

Section Bureau of Epidemiology

Division of Disease Control and Health Protection, Florida Department of Health 850-245-4331

[Robert.Griffin@flhealth.gov](mailto:Robert.Griffin@flhealth.gov)

### 3. What immunization and school-entry health examination documentation will be required for enrollment?

School districts are encouraged to work with their local health departments in developing procedures to expedite immunization and health examination requirements.

#### Florida Law, Rule & Guidelines:

- **[Section 1003.22, Florida Statutes \(F.S.\)](#), School-entry health examinations; Immunization against communicable diseases; exemptions; duties of Department of Health.** Subsections (1) and (5) provide for a temporary exemption for 30 school days for children and youth who are experiencing homelessness at [http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&URL=1000-1099/1003/Sections/1003.22.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=1000-1099/1003/Sections/1003.22.html).
- **[Rule 64D-3.046, Florida Administrative Code \(F.A.C.\)](#), Immunization Requirements: Public and Nonpublic Schools, Grades Preschool, Kindergarten Through 12, and Adult Education Classes.** Subsection (4) allows for an authorized school official to issue a temporary exemption for students who are homeless at <https://www.flrules.org/gateway/ruleNo.asp?id=64D-3.046>.
- **[Immunization Guidelines: Florida Schools, Childcare Facilities and Family Daycare Homes](#)** - Pages 10 and 11 further address temporary exemptions for students who are homeless at [http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/immunization/children-and-adolescents/\\_documents/school-guide.pdf](http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/immunization/children-and-adolescents/_documents/school-guide.pdf).

#### National Guidance Documents:

- **[Interim Immunization Recommendations for Individuals Displaced by a Disaster](#)** - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides recommendations at <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/disease/vaccrecdisplaced.html> when immunization records are not available.
- **[Homeless Children and Youths Guidance](#)** - The U.S. Department of Education revised *Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program Non-Regulatory Guidance* (2017) at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/160240ehcyguidance072716updated0317.pdf> in accordance with obligations under the McKinney-Vento Act. School immunization guidance is addressed on pages 1, 21, 24 and 26.



### III. Educational Placement

Contact: Andrew Weatherill, School Counseling Consultant

Student Support Services Project

[Andrew.Weatherill@fldoe.org](mailto:Andrew.Weatherill@fldoe.org)

850-245-7851

#### 4. How are schools to determine the educational placement of students when information is not available?

In the absence of educational records, the receiving district may place a student in an age-appropriate grade placement and monitor progress. Additionally, the district should provide instructional assessments to validate placement, skill development and English language proficiency. The district should provide interventions as appropriate based on assessment data.

#### 5. What is the process to verify successful completion of middle grades courses and high school credits for secondary-level students?

If a student's records are not available, the receiving district may determine grade-level placement based upon the district's student progression plan.

[Rule 6A-1.09941, F.A.C.](#), State Uniform Transfer of Students in Middle Grades and High School, establishes uniform procedures relating to the acceptance of transfer work and credit for students entering Florida's public schools.

(1) The procedures relating to the acceptance of transfer work and courses for students in middle grades 6, 7, and 8 from out-of-state or out-of-country shall be as follows:

(a) Grades earned and offered for acceptance shall be based on official transcripts and shall be accepted at face value subject to validation if required by the receiving school's accreditation. If validation of the official transcript is deemed necessary, or if the student does not possess an official transcript or is a home education student, successful completion of courses shall be validated through performance during the first grading period as outlined in paragraph (1)(b), of this rule.

(b) Validation of courses shall be based on performance in classes at the receiving school. A student transferring into a school shall be placed at the appropriate sequential course level and should be passing each required course at the end of the first grading period. Students who do not meet this requirement shall have courses validated using the Alternative Validation Procedure, as outlined in paragraph (1)(c), of this rule.

(c) Alternative Validation Procedure. If validation based on performance as described above is not satisfactory, then any one of the following alternatives identified in the district student progression plan shall be used for validation purposes as determined by the teacher, principal and parent:

1. Portfolio evaluation by the superintendent or designee,
2. Demonstrated performance in courses taken at other public or private accredited schools,
3. Demonstrated proficiencies on nationally normed standardized subject area assessments,
4. Demonstrated proficiencies on a statewide, standardized assessment, or

5. Written review of the criteria utilized for a given subject provided by the former school.

(2) The procedures relating to the acceptance of transfer work and credits for students in high school from out of state or out of country shall be as follows:

(a) Credits and grades earned and offered for acceptance shall be based on official transcripts and shall be accepted at face value subject to validation if required by the receiving school's accreditation. If validation of the official transcript is deemed necessary, or if the student does not possess an official transcript or is a home education student, credits shall be validated through performance during the first grading period as outlined in paragraph (2)(b), of this rule. Assessment requirements for transfer students under s. 1003.4282, F.S., must be satisfied.

(b) Validation of credits shall be based on performance in classes at the receiving school. A student transferring into a school shall be placed at the appropriate sequential course level and should have a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 at the end of the first grading period. Students who do not meet this requirement shall have credits validated using the Alternative Validation Procedure, as outlined in paragraph (2)(c), of this rule.

(c) Alternative Validation Procedure. If validation based on performance as described above is not satisfactory, then any one of the following alternatives shall be used for validation purposes as determined by the teacher, principal and parent:

1. Portfolio evaluation by the superintendent or designee,
  2. Written recommendation by a Florida certified teacher selected by the parent and approved by the principal,
  3. Satisfactory performance in courses taken through dual enrollment or at other public or private accredited schools,
  4. Satisfactory performance on nationally normed standardized subject area assessments,
  5. Satisfactory performance on a statewide, standardized assessment, or
  6. Written review of the criteria utilized for a given subject provided by the former school.
- Students must be provided at least 90 days from date of transfer to prepare for assessments outlined in subparagraphs (1)(c)3., and 4. and (2)(c)4. and 5., of this rule if required.

In addition, [s. 1003.433, F.S.](#), Learning opportunities for out-of-state and out-of-country transfer students and students needing additional instruction to meet high school requirement, specifies the following:

(1) Students who enter a Florida public school at the 11th or 12th grade from out of state or out of country shall not be required to spend additional time in a Florida public school in order to meet the high school course requirements if the student has met all requirements of the school district, state, or country from which he or she is transferring. Such students who are not proficient in English should receive immediate and intensive instruction in English language acquisition. However, to receive a standard high school diploma, a transfer student must earn a 2.0 GPA and meet the requirements under [s. 1008.22, F.S.](#)

(2) Students who earn the required 24 credits for the standard high school diploma except for passage of any must-pass assessment under [s. 1003.4282, F.S.](#), or [s. 1008.22, F.S.](#), or an alternate assessment by the end of grade 12 must be provided the following learning opportunities:

(a) Participation in an accelerated high school equivalency diploma preparation program during the summer.

(b) Upon receipt of a certificate of completion, be allowed to take the College Placement Test and be admitted to developmental education or credit courses at a Florida College System institution, as

appropriate.

(c) Participation in an adult general education program as provided in [s. 1004.93, F.S.](#), for such time as the student requires to master English, reading, mathematics or any other subject required for high school graduation. A student attending an adult general education program shall have the opportunity to take any must-pass assessment under [s. 1003.4282, F.S.](#), or [s. 1008.22, F.S.](#), an unlimited number of times in order to receive a standard high school diploma.

(3) Students who have been enrolled in an ESOL program for less than two school years and have met all requirements for the standard high school diploma except for passage of any must-pass assessment under [s. 1003.4282, F.S.](#), or [s. 1008.22, F.S.](#), or alternate assessment may receive immersion English language instruction during the summer following their senior year. Students receiving such instruction are eligible to take the required assessment or alternate assessment and receive a standard high school diploma upon passage of the required assessment or alternate assessment. This subsection shall be implemented to the extent funding is provided in the General Appropriations Act.

#### **IV. Exceptional Student Education**

Contact: Leanne Grillot, Senior Educational Program Director  
Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services  
[Leanne.Grillot@fldoe.org](mailto:Leanne.Grillot@fldoe.org)  
850-245-0475

#### **6. What procedures should be followed for students who have disabilities?**

To the extent possible, follow existing procedures regarding transfer students according to [Rule 6A-6.0334, F.A.C.](#) If records are not available, accept and document the parent/guardian's statement that the student is a student with a disability. Based upon the information available, determine the most appropriate placement and program, obtain parental consent for services, develop an individual educational plan (IEP), and provide services as soon as possible. Monitor the student's progress, proceed with consent for initial evaluations and eligibility procedures, and provide the parent with procedural safeguards.

#### **V. Student and Teacher Support**

Contact: Dr. David Wheeler, School Psychology  
Consultant Student Support Services Project  
[David.Wheeler@fldoe.org](mailto:David.Wheeler@fldoe.org)  
850-245-7851

#### **7. What types of supports need to be made available to displaced students who may be experiencing behavioral/emotional trauma resulting from their experiences?**

We know that children experience the impact and aftermath of traumatic events differently than adults. Your student services staff (counselors, school psychologists, social workers, nurses) can be a valuable resource to teachers as student issues are identified. Increased awareness of presenting behaviors should be monitored and brought to your school problem-solving team. Encourage your schools to have a plan for welcoming/orienting these new students. It is important to develop a



coordinated system to respond to ongoing escalating behaviors.

The Student Support Services Project website offers a collection of resources for student services staff to assist with outreach and support of families and school staff. To view these resources, please visit <http://sss.usf.edu/resources/topic/emergency/hurricane.html>.

For bilingual resources related to hurricane recover for educators and families, see: <http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/helping-children-after-natural-disaster>.

#### **8. What type of supports should be made available to current students and staff who have been impacted by hurricanes?**

We understand that many of your students and staff have family and friends who are suffering the effects of recent hurricanes. Please urge your school staff to provide supportive counseling to the impacted students and school site staff and/or families, and refer to a counseling professional as needed.

[“After the Storm: A Guide to Help Children Cope with the Psychological Effects of a Hurricane”](http://www.hcps.org/f/aboutus/afterthestorm.pdf) is a workbook designed by the University of Miami to assist adults and children to cope with the psychological trauma caused by a hurricane. See <http://www.hcps.org/f/aboutus/afterthestorm.pdf>.

There are two “just-in-time” resources from the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP).

- For more information on helping children adjust to new location after a natural disaster, see the NASP [Natural Disaster](http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis/natural-disaster) resource page at <http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis/natural-disaster>.
- The NASP [School Safety & Crisis](http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis) resource page offers many resources, including addressing grief and trauma. See <http://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources/school-safety-and-crisis>.

Additional resources may be found on the Student Support Services Project website (<http://sss.usf.edu>) under Resources > Resource Topics > Emergency Preparedness/Crisis Intervention.