

July 6, 2020



2020-EO-06: Further Guidance for Closing Achievement Gaps and Creating Safe Spaces for Learning

Framing the Next Steps

- We recognize that districts and schools are working through challenging questions of optimizing learning, educational equity, showing compassion and grace for students and families with health concerns, and supporting Florida's economic recovery.

Framing the Next Steps

- Typically, education quality and funding is validated through a mix of inputs like attendance and learning outcomes.
- Recognizing that many of you are considering options to support students and families with health concerns, we must implement a pathway for adherence to these essential state laws without sacrificing quality, equity and opportunity for all students.

Applicability

- Districts and schools that wish to consider innovative alternatives to supporting their students' and families' unique needs – during this temporary state of emergency – will need to submit a plan.
- Districts and schools that wish to open as usual do NOT need to submit a plan.
- This is temporary for Fall 2020.

Necessity

- Structure to ensure equity in opportunity for:
 - Medically vulnerable students;
 - Students with disabilities;
 - English language learners;
 - Migrant students;
 - Low-income students;
 - Struggling students who represent achievement gaps.
- Ensure controls for quality, students' direct access to their teachers and peer-to-peer learning.
- Ensure financial accountability.
- Ensure financial stability for schools and education professionals.

Summary of the Commissioner's Public K-12 Framework

Format

- Live synchronous or asynchronous education
- Ability to interact with teacher and peers

Content

- Same curriculum and instructional hours whether in-person or at home
- Must address equity for all types of learners: low-income, ESE, ELL and struggling students
- Must have a focus on narrowing achievement gaps

Progress

- Must maintain automated attendance records by day and hours of instruction
- Must have a system for monitoring daily engagements in every class
- Conduct progress monitoring
- Provide these results to FDOE

I. Reopening Requirements

- a.** All schools open
- b.** Full panoply of services
- c.** Progress monitoring
- d.** Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners
- e.** Equitable school flexibility (traditional public, public charter and private)

Ia. All Schools Open

- All school boards and charter school governing boards must open brick and mortar schools **in August at least five days per week for all students**, subject to advice and orders of the Florida Department of Health, local departments of health, Executive Order 20-149 and subsequent executive orders.

Ib. Full Panoply of Services

- School districts and charter school governing boards must **provide the full array of services that are required by law** so that families who wish to educate their children in a brick and mortar school have the opportunity to do so.
- These services include in-person instruction (barring a local health directive to the contrary), specialized instruction, and services for students with IEPs or live synchronous or asynchronous instruction with the same curriculum as in-person instruction and the ability to interact with a student's teacher and peers as approved by the Commissioner of Education.

Ic. Progress Monitoring

- **Robust progress monitoring must be extended to all students in the same district or public charter school; tiered support must be provided to all students who are not making adequate progress.** Students who are receiving instruction through innovative teaching methods must be provided **additional support and the opportunity to transition to another teaching method if they fail to make adequate progress.**
- **Progress monitoring data must be shared regularly with the Department,** to help ensure that resources are rapidly deployed to support students who are failing to make adequate progress.

Id. Students with Disabilities

- **Students with IEPs must be given the services necessary** to ensure they experience a free and appropriate education. School districts **must immediately begin working with IEP teams to identify students who may have regressed during school closures. School districts must ensure that IEP teams determine needed services, including compensatory services.** IEP teams must follow a student-centered approach with a commitment to ensure that the individual needs of each child are met.

Id. English Language Learners (ELLs)

- If ELLs' English reading, writing, listening or speaking skills have regressed during school closures, **school districts should convene an ELL Committee meeting with appropriate staff and parents to determine if additional or supplemental English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services are needed.** Although ELL Committee meetings may take place virtually or on-site, school districts should ensure that appropriate identification of English skills has been noted and that schools have the resources to implement additional interventions and strategies.

le. Equitable School Flexibility

- School districts must extend the same flexibility in instructional methods to every charter school that submits a reopening plan to the sponsoring district addressing the requirements set forth in this Order. Charter schools with an approved reopening plan are authorized to exercise this flexibility provided in this Order.
- Either a school district or a charter school governing board may request assistance from the Department to resolve any disputes over a sponsor's approval of a charter school's reopening plan.

II. Reopening Plans

- a. **School districts** must submit a reopening plan that satisfies the requirements of this Order to the Department.
- b. **Charter school governing boards** must submit a reopening plan to the sponsoring district.
- c. **Private schools that accept scholarship students** must submit a reopening plan to the Department.

Plan format and the review and approval process will be established by the Department.



Review and Approval Factors

- The Department will consider factors, including but not limited to, the percentage of students in the district who are projected to learn through live synchronous or asynchronous instruction, and the quality of proposed progress monitoring data and efforts to close achievement gaps.

III. Reporting Flexibility and Financial Continuity

School districts and charter school governing boards with an approved reopening plan will receive reporting flexibility that is designed to provide financial continuity for the 2020 fall semester.

- a. Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) funding
- b. Full-time Equivalent (FTE) credit
- c. October survey and instructional hours

IIIa. FEFP Funding

- School boards and charter school governing boards will receive the General Appropriations Act (GAA) funding based on pre-COVID-19 FTE student membership forecasts. Rule 6A-1.0452, Florida Administrative Code, is waived to the extent that the Department will not reduce the distribution of funds based on the July and October 2020 student surveys.

IIIb. FTE Credit for Innovative Learning Environments

- Although it is anticipated that most students will return to full-time brick and mortar schools, some parents will continue their child's education through innovative learning environments, often due to the medical vulnerability of the child or another family member who resides in the same household.
- As described in this Order, school boards and charter school governing boards with an approved reopening plan are authorized to report approved innovative learning students for full FTE credit.
- However, students receiving virtual education will continue to receive FTE credit as provided in s. 1011.61(1)(c)1.b.(III)-(IV), F.S.

IIIc. October Survey and Instructional Hours

- The October survey will record students receiving instruction through traditional as well as innovative learning environments. The Department will provide modified instructions for the October survey that will authorize the reporting of instruction through traditional and innovative learning environments.
- Sections 1011.61(1)(a) and 1003.23(1), F.S., and Rules 6A-1.0451 and 6A-1.0014, F.A.C., are waived to provide school districts and charter school governing boards with additional flexibility in recording and reporting student attendance and instructional hours, based on guidance from the Department consistent with this Order.

IV. Private Schools that Accept Scholarship Students

- Nonpublic private schools that accept scholarship students may also be deemed by the Commissioner, based on the requirements in sections 1a. and 1b. and by providing progress monitoring data at the conclusion of the 2020 fall semester for scholarship students to the Department, to satisfy the requirements for each student to maintain direct student contact with teachers under s. 1002.421, F.S., and "actual school instruction days" for purposes of satisfying the daily and hourly instructional time as set forth in Rule 6A-1.09512, F.A.C., for students participating in scholarship programs.



Questions?