

Q&A for Florida's Students, Parents and Educators



Updated: March 25, 2020

Below are answers to some common questions educators and parents have about Florida's students, schools and educators during the coronavirus pandemic.

- General Information
(including testing, promotion, retention and distance learning)
- Students with IEPs
- Evaluation and School Grades
- Certification
- Funding
- Bargaining And Impact Bargaining

General Information *(including testing, promotion, retention and distance learning)*

What does it mean to be closed until April 15th? When will it be known if we are going to be closed longer?

This decision is made by the state every two weeks as they learn more from the government and CDC. School districts are to work on distance and digital learning for grades 6-12 to keep students on track for course credit and graduation.

How does cancellation of state assessments impact students?

- All accountability testing for high school seniors, expected to graduate this spring, is waived and they will graduate, but they will still have to finish the semester and ultimately be graded.
- For non-seniors, waiving requirements for any course requiring an EOC. For instance, if they're in algebra they're waiving the algebra EOC. They won't need EOC components for their grade or their credit. However, those who haven't passed the grade 10 ELA must pass it at a future administration, and they still must meet the mathematics requirement before their graduation, if they are not currently a senior.
- For grade 3, promotion grade 3 ELA/FSA data won't be available, so promotion decisions will be made in consultation with parents/teacher based on a student's classroom performance.

Will parents have ability to request retention?

Yes, if a parent wants to do that and they think it's best for the student they can do so. Parents should have a conversation with their child's teacher to discuss this decision.

How do minutes for digital/distance learning add up for credit for students?

Right now, FLDOE anticipates the year ending on time as scheduled. However, the Districts have been given flexibility to extend their calendars. This is a working condition that you must impact bargain. The FLDOE guidance is “[we are] trying to give kids as much education as possible with a default of compassion and grace.”

Are we going to waive instructional time?

The Governor has given authority to waive instructional hours, but as it stands now, FLDOE believes we can get to the end of the school year on time. School is in session, teachers will be teaching, grades will be given just in distance learning capacity.

How will Advanced Placement exams be affected?

Please see AP Central’s March 20 AP Updates for Schools Impacted by Coronavirus.

How will International Baccalaureate (IB) exams be affected?

On March 23 the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) announced that the May 2020 testing will not be held. Please read their update for complete details.

Students with IEPs

How are we addressing students with IEPs?

To support students with identified IEP-related services who may have a disruption in services, school districts in coordination with a student’s parents and IEP team are given flexibility to work for the remainder of the school year to provide alternative services or delay services until later in the summer months. You can also expand your hospital/homebound programs to accommodate students with IEPs.

NEW

What does it mean for adults in their last year of school under their IEPs? Can they go until 23?

In general, each district’s plan determines the time of exit at 21. Some allow until the students 22 birthday. Others, the year that the student turns 22 etc. There is no state funding for districts to serve students after age 22 in the k-12 FEFP. IDEA does allow for funds to be used for such purpose if the district chose to do so. This would be an individual district decision and would require an amendment to their IDEA grant.

NEW

I am concerned about transition IEPs for my students as they exit high school. What plans are being made to help these students continue their learning?

IEP teams will continue transition planning with students and families through virtual mechanisms. It may take a bit of creativity, but local district teams, have been working non-stop to plan. Many of the details at the district level may not be finalized.

Evaluation and School Grades

What happens to my evaluation if we can't finish the school year?

Each bargaining unit will need to address how your evaluations are affected. You may already have language in the CBA or a past practice that addresses this.

With cancellations in accountability what will my district grade be?

There won't be a grade, everything remains as whatever was achieved in the prior year.

My school is in Turnaround status. What happens to that status?

K-12 school grades will not be calculated for 2019-20 and schools in turnaround may continue their current status for the 2020-21 school year to avoid disruption to school leadership and operations.

How will school recognition money be determined next year?

There is an allocation in the budget for school recognition funds, however, without new school grades it is undetermined how this money would be distributed. More guidance will come when we have the answer.

Certification

What is happening with certification exams, certification renewal and endorsements?

The fees for taking exams is waived for 120 days as of March 18, 2020.

NEW

Will fees for certification renewal be waived?

No, only testing fees are waived.

NEW

What about teachers who will be required to have added reading, ESE or ELL certifications or endorsements to their certificate by this fall?

Some of these classes are face-to-face or require teachers implement specific strategies to document mastery, and the certification tests may not be available to have results returned before the school year starts.

How will college students who are interns and need to finish for their graduation requirements continue their internships and conduct classes so they can be certificated?

FLDOE does not have a specific hour requirement. FLDOE has basically said that universities should work in partnership with school districts to ensure students are successful in their completion of internships.

Funding

Any reduction to district allocation?

No, every District will receive 100% of their full allocation for the 19-20 school year.

Any flexibility in categorical funds?

K-12 districts are allowed to redirect their allocations and reading scholarship accounts to help low income students to establish distance learning.

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Bargaining And Impact Bargaining

During this emergency, is all bargaining guidance in effect?

The rules that establish your rights to bargain are in Chapter 447. This is still in effect – Chapter 447 has not been suspended. You always have the right to directly bargain wages, hours of work and conditions of employment.

How do I know when I need to impact bargain?

Everything about the shuttering of schools and working from home has an impact on these bargainable areas, wages, hours of work, and conditions of employment. Notify your District counterpart of the issues, the impacts of those issues, and the areas of the contract that are affected by closing campuses to students in a Demand to Bargain letter

How do I get started notifying the District that we need to bargain over these issues?

You should be working with your District counterpart and documenting your work into a signed Memoranda of Understanding.

Submit a question

Do you have a question that doesn't appear on our list? Many questions will depend on what is being done in your district, so please also contact your local union with **individual** questions.

If it's a **universal** question that can benefit others, we will share it out. Send it to us!

Click on the link below to go to the FEA website and submit your question.

<https://feaweb.org/covid19/qa-for-florida-students-parents-educators/#qabargaining>