

District receives state approval to continue online learning option

Alachua County Public School students enrolled in the district's online learning option, known as the Alachua Digital Academy, will be able to remain in that option for the rest of the school year

The Florida Department of Education has approved the district's application to continue offering the Digital Academy for the second semester, which begins on Monday, February 1st.

"I'm pleased that this option will still be available for our students," said Superintendent Dr. Carlee Simon. "I know this news will be a relief to many families who currently have their children enrolled in the Digital Academy."



Under an emergency order issued by Education Commissioner Richard Corcoran on November 30, Florida school districts are required to notify the parents/guardians of students who are not making 'adequate progress' in an online option such as the Digital Academy and encourage them to return the student to a brick-and-mortar setting. The parent must indicate in writing if they want their child to move to in-person schooling or remain online.

District schools will be sending letters home to the families of students who are not making adequate progress based on grades, attendance and regular assessments. Families will be invited to meet with school staff to discuss their child's progress and options before deciding if they want to that student to return to in-person schooling or remain in the Digital Academy.

Letters to families of students not making adequate progress are scheduled to go out the week of January 19.

The district will also expand its existing supports to students who are not making adequate progress whether they are attending school in-person or online. For example, additional staff will provide targeted help for individual students and small groups, and tutoring will be available before and/or after school and on Saturdays, among other strategies. Teachers will continue to have access to training in areas such as effective distance learning, culturally responsive teaching and trauma-informed care. The district will also be increasing its efforts to ensure students are attending school either in person or online. Those efforts include home visits and wellness checks, truancy teams, incentives and rewards for attendance, and public service announcements stressing the importance of being in school.

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