

## DISTANCE LEARNING

### DEFINITION

Distance learning, an option different from the traditional classroom, takes place when space, time or both separate the teacher and the learner. Whether online through the Internet or through videoconferencing, distance learning offers educational opportunities that meet students' changing needs and grant them the flexibility of learning anytime, anyplace and at a pace that meets their individual learning styles.

### RATIONALE

Broward Virtual Education (BVED) is a franchise of and modeled on the Florida Virtual School. *The Florida School Code Rewrite took effect on January 1, 2003. In this revised code, PART II, STUDENT AND PARENTAL RIGHTS (s. 1002.20 (6a)), "Parents of public school students may seek whatever public school choice options that are applicable to their students and are available to students in their school districts. These options may include... the Florida Virtual School."* Through Broward Virtual Education, Broward County teachers and staff will serve Broward County public school students who take a course online.

### RULES

#### I. PROVIDERS OF DISTANCE LEARNING

1. Providers, for the purpose of classifying transfer credits which meet specific graduation requirements and without further validation from Broward schools, shall be accredited by a regional accrediting agency or accredited through their state's Department of Education.
2. Broward Virtual Education will apply for CITA-SACS Accreditation.

#### II. ELIGIBILITY, REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT

1. Students, regardless of grade level, who are academically qualified to take a course for high school credit in a Broward County public school may use distance learning to take the same course, receive a grade to be averaged into the student's GPA and be granted high school credit when earned through the district or a district approved virtual provider upon completion of the course. No minimum GPA is required to take a course through distance learning. All prerequisites as determined by the school of record must be successfully completed prior to enrollment in a virtual course.
2. Online learning is an alternative to learning in a traditional classroom. It is not for every student. Characteristics that aid in the success of an online student are:
  - reading competency
  - time management skills

- intrinsic motivation
  - self-discipline
  - basic computer literacy
3. There will be ongoing registration throughout the calendar year for online courses.
  4. Seats for the virtual classes will be allocated to the district schools through an equitable process.
  5. A pool of virtual seats will be reserved for emergency situations and individual schools' innovative projects.
  6. If the number of qualified, fulltime student applications exceeds the capacity of Broward Virtual Education, then a lottery system will be used to determine those students who will be accepted to the program.
  7. Charter School students will be served at cost recovery.
  8. At the discretion of the Principal at the student's school of record, distance learning courses may be selected by students who:
    - need to make up credits in order to graduate on schedule;
    - are seeking grade forgiveness;
    - are eligible for hospital or homebound programs;
    - want to take a course(s) not offered at their school;
    - have scheduling conflicts;
    - may need/want a learning environment different from that of a traditional classroom setting;
    - want to accelerate their academic program by taking additional courses to facilitate early graduation;
    - are excused from being physically present on the campus of their school of record for an extended period of time.
  9. For online courses, parent, student and principal (or designee) must confer and agree that course(s) selected is (are) academically and developmentally appropriate for the student and that all prerequisites as determined by the student's school of record have been completed before the Registration Packet is submitted to BVED.
  10. An appeals process is provided regarding eligibility, registration and enrollment.

11. A student can drop an online course without penalty within a window of 14 consecutive days. A full-time student can withdraw from the virtual school courses without grade penalty within a window of 14 consecutive days and transfer to a traditional school. After 14 days, grades earned to the date of transfer will go with the student to the new school.

### III. COURSES

1. All coursework is based on the Sunshine State Standards and meets the mandated benchmarks.
2. All courses must be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
3. The school of record must cooperate with the provider of Advanced Placement courses through distance learning with respect to the provision of Advanced Placement Examinations and their administration.
4. Online courses in progress must be indicated on the student's report card.

### IV. CREDIT

One full credit or half credit earned as a result of instruction through distance learning is defined as the successful completion of course requirements.

### V. INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

1. Broward Virtual Education will follow the Broward County School Board procedures for hiring teachers and staff with the unique technological skills necessary to meet program requirements. All instructors are state certified in field.
2. The student/teacher ratios for distance learning teachers comply with the legislative mandate from the State of Florida.
3. The online teacher calendar will be 196 days with extensions as needed to a maximum of 241 days.

### VI. STUDENT PROGRESS AND GRADES

1. A student enrolled in Broward Virtual Education may participate in online classes at the school of record, at home, in the public library or through other community agencies, wherever and whenever a computer with Internet access is available.
2. The district grading policy will be the same for distance learning courses as it is for courses taken in a traditional classroom.
3. The distance learning instructional teacher shall be the teacher of record and will report the student's progress to the student, parent, and principal (or designee) at the student's school of record at a minimum of the appropriate number of times

determined by Board Policy 6000.1.

4. Grades submitted by the distance learning teacher are the student's final grades and will be posted to the student's permanent record.
5. Guidance services will be provided by the student's school of record.
6. FCAT and Advanced Placement testing will be provided by the student's school of record.
7. ESOL, ESE and other special services will be provided by the student's school of record.

## VII. NCAA ELIGIBILITY

The NCAA has approved all core courses for use in establishing the initial eligibility certification status of student athletes through the district's Broward Virtual Education.

Authority: *s. 1002.20 (6a)*  
Policy Adopted 6/17/03