

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF  
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Honorable Chair and Members of the School Board  
Dr. Robert Avossa, Superintendent  
Chair and Members of the Audit Committee

**FROM:** Lung Chiu, Inspector General <sup>KLC</sup>

**DATE:** August 28, 2017

**SUBJECT:** Transmittal of Final Investigative Report  
*Case 16-515 Adult and Community Education Department*

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In accordance with School Board Policy 1.092 we hereby transmit the above-referenced final report.

The report addresses allegations regarding the Adult and Community Education Department. Specifically, it was alleged that: 1) school centers were forced to report data for which they had no direct oversight and 2) a data processor was given a directive to input virtual students' data under a specific school site for 2015 Spring/Summer and Winter Terms.

The results of the investigation concluded that both allegations were unsubstantiated.

The report is finalized and posted on the Inspector General's website;  
[www.palmbeachschools.org/inspectorgeneral](http://www.palmbeachschools.org/inspectorgeneral) .

Office of Inspector General  
The School District of Palm Beach County  
Case No. 16-515

*Issue: Fraudulent Reporting*

*Location: Adult and Community Education Department*

## **INVESTIGATIVE REPORT - FINAL**

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### **AUTHORITY**

*School Board Policy 1.092* provides for the Inspector General to receive and consider complaints, and conduct, supervise, or coordinate such inquiries, investigations, or reviews as the Inspector General deems appropriate.

This investigation was conducted by Veronica Vallecillo, Senior Investigator I.D. #200, in compliance with the *Quality Standards for Investigations, Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General*, promulgated by the Association of Inspectors General.

### **ALLEGATIONS**

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) received a complaint from Ms. Deborah Utterback-Nash (Complainant) on July 25, 2016 regarding the Adult and Community Education Department as it relates to Adult Virtual. The Complainant alleged the following: 1) school centers were forced to report data for which they had no direct oversight and believed this to be “illegal and/or fraudulent reporting” and 2) Dr. Joseph Lee directed a data processor to input virtual students’ data under Boca Community High School Adult Education for 2015 Spring/Summer and Winter Terms.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Adult Virtual Program, part of the District’s Adult and Community Education Department (Department), enables adults no longer enrolled in public high school to register for online courses that provide them with knowledge and skills needed at work, at home, and in the community in order to compete in today’s global society.

A virtual student is defined as a student who attends more than 51% of his/her program online and is one who actively participates in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) or Adult Basic Education (ABE)/GED program through the online platform. The student studies at his/her own pace and has access to the program 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Attendance in a virtual program is calculated based on specific task completion for a given period.

### **DOCUMENTS REVIEWED**

- *F.S. 1004.93 Adult general education (2015 & 2016)*
- *Florida Administrative Code 6A-6.014 General Requirements for Adult Education Program*
- *School Board Policy 3.02 Code of Ethics*

- Department of Adult & Community Education Procedures Manual (14/15 and 15/16)
- District Emails related to allegations

## **INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED**

### **Guarn Sims, Director of Adult and Community Education**

On December 5, 2016 the OIG discussed with Sims the allegations of case # 16-515. Sims explained the virtual aspect of Adult Education is handled by his department and not each individual site. Sims stated the only times a virtual student would have to go to a site would be to register, make payment, and required testing (pre/post course). Sims stated a virtual student's progress and attendance is monitored by virtual instructors. Sims further stated his department has case managers that assist virtual teachers and provide technical support.

Sims stated that as of August 2016 the department implemented new procedures where virtual students are to be directed to central sites instead of just any available site. Sims further stated the new procedures will alleviate some of the confusion that has occurred. Sims noted the following sites will be considered central sites: Delray Beach Full Service Center, Atlantic Community High School, Boynton Beach Community High School, and the Adult Education Center on Okeechobee Blvd. Sims explained there have been incidents at certain sites where students interested in the virtual program have had a difficult time obtaining information or getting registered.

Sims stated while some procedures have been updated what has been the same is that the virtual aspect has had its own center number apart from the other centers.

When asked if for any reason a school data processor would be asked to input information regarding virtual students, Sims reiterated the procedures he stated above.

### **Dawn Hitchon, FTE Field Support Technician**

On March 15, 2017 the OIG met with Hitchon to discuss the allegations of case # 16-515. Hitchon stated she received the request mentioned in the allegation from Dr. Geoff Mckee's (previous principal of Boca Community High School) secretary, Lynn Strayer. Hitchon explained Deborah Utterback-Nash, Assistant Principal, went on sick leave around the same time the matter occurred. Hitchon further explained prior to Utterback-Nash leaving she asked Hitchon not to input any data for virtual students as she was not comfortable with it.

Hitchon stated a couple of weeks into Utterback-Nash's leave, she received an email from the secretary asking her to input the virtual students information. Hitchon noted she thought Utterback-Nash had spoken to Dr. McKee regarding the situation and received the okay from him not to enter virtual information. Hitchon stated she entered

the information as requested and forwarded the email from the secretary to Utterback-Nash.

Hitchon stated that was not the first time she had received such a request. Hitchon further stated for someone to ask her to input information regarding mistakes or oversights related to virtual students is not uncommon as the Adult Education Department is given a couple of months from the State to clean up data.

Hitchon stated she did not speak with Dr. Lee regarding the matter. Hitchon further stated she knows that Dr. Lee sent a letter to Dr. McKee with the request but she never saw the actual letter from Dr. Lee. Hitchon stated it is possible Dr. Lee's letter may have been attached to the email she received from the secretary but she is not sure.

When asked if her day to day responsibilities included dealing with virtual students, Hitchon stated her day to day did not include dealing with virtual students but sometimes she did have to input virtual student's registrations and activate the students. Hitchon noted that although she had to input students' registrations and activate them, she was not provided with the registration documents. Hitchon stated the registration documents were sent to a virtual coordinator.

#### **Joseph Lee, North Regional Instructional Superintendent**

On March 29, 2017 the OIG met with Lee to discuss the allegations of case #16-515. Lee oversaw the Adult Education Department from 2012 thru 2016. Lee stated he did not go to Boca Community High School nor did he speak to any data processor regarding the matter in question.

Lee explained that when the Adult Education programs at the schools were out of compliance it was customary to call school principals to notify them, as ultimately the responsibility falls back on the school. Lee noted he did not make any direct contact other than speaking to the school principal.

When asked if during his tenure with the Adult Education Department there were written procedures in place that referred to virtual students, Lee stated there were bulletins, professional development and technical assistance provided by the Adult Education Department. Lee noted requests for school's to correct data did not violate any policy or statute. Lee added the requests were very common.

#### **RESULTS OF INVESTIGATION**

*Allegation #1: School centers were forced to report data for which they had no direct oversight*

According to the Department, the Adult Virtual Academy was officially assigned a school number on February 4, 2015, and the Department began to enter virtual students under that school

number around August 9, 2015. It appears that prior to this, virtual students may have been entered using the school site they registered at.

The OIG reviewed the *2014/2015 Department of Adult & Community Education Procedures Manual*. The manual states it provides “guidance to administrators and persons with test administration, student placement and data entry responsibilities”. The manual includes a section titled “Virtual Education”; however, it does not include guidance for data entry on virtual students. *See Exhibit 1.*

The OIG also reviewed the *2015/2016 Department of Adult & Community Education Procedures Manual*. The OIG noted the manual includes a section titled “2015-2016 Adult Virtual Program Technical Assistance Guide”. The guide includes information regarding the “Registration Process” which states, in part, the following:

- The school site will scan the Registration Form #1700 and Learner’s Rights & Responsibilities Form #2523 and send them to [adultedvirtual@palmbeachschools.org](mailto:adultedvirtual@palmbeachschools.org) each night, even if the student has not yet tested.
- Adult Virtual Academy staff fills out Course Enrollment Form #1701. The school site does not complete this form.
- Adult Virtual Academy staff enters student into TERMS and enrolls student in the correct course code and virtual section number.

Additionally, the guide also states “The Adult Virtual Academy’s data processor will be responsible for updating the student attendance in TERMS” and “if students who should have been withdrawn appear on the report, the lead instructor will notify the Adult Virtual Academy’s data processor to withdraw the student.” *See Exhibit 2.*

The OIG did not find a policy or rule that states a school site would be in violation of such for entering virtual students’ information. As stated by Hitchon, this practice was not uncommon. However, such practices may leave room for inaccurate information to be recorded and/or submitted since a school site may not have all the information necessary for virtual students (e.g. curriculum, attendance).

As evidenced by the Department’s 2015-16 Procedures Manual, processes were put in place for how the Adult Virtual Academy should handle the input of virtual students and student attendance. The allegation regarding school centers being forced to report data for which they had no direct oversight is unsubstantiated.

*Allegation #2: Dr. Joseph Lee directed a data processor to input virtual students’ data under Boca Community High School Adult Education for 2015 Spring/Summer and Winter Terms.*

During OIG interviews, Dr. Lee and Ms. Hitchon refuted the allegation that Lee directed a data processor to input virtual student’s data under Boca Community High School Adult Education for 2015 Spring/Summer and Winter Terms.

The OIG did not locate the letter from Lee as stated by Hitchon; however, several emails were obtained that indicate there was communication between Lee and McKee, the then Principal of Boca Community High School, regarding virtual students.

Records show an email from Lee to McKee dated May 4, 2015 titled "Virtual Student Data" that stated "This is just a reminder that as of today, the virtual students have not been entered into TERMS. This needs to be completed no later than Friday, May 15." *See Exhibit 3.*

Records also show an email from Hitchon dated May 27, 2015 titled "Winter Term Data" that stated "The students attached have been added to the Winter Term for Virtual under Boca High Adult (0962)." *See Exhibit 4.*

The OIG found no evidence that Lee directed a data processor to input virtual student's data under Boca Community High School Adult Education for 2015 Spring/Summer and Winter Terms. The OIG ascertained Lee emailed the then Principal of the school with regard to virtual students. The allegation regarding Dr. Joseph Lee directing a data processor to input virtual students' data under Boca Community High School Adult Education for 2015 Spring/Summer and Winter Terms is unsubstantiated.

#### **AFFECTED PARTY RESPONSES**

In accordance with School Board Policy 1.092 (8)(b)(iv), a draft copy of this report was provided to Dr. Joseph Lee, Ms. Dawn Hitchon and Mr. Guarn Sims, who were given 20 days to respond. As of August 18, 2017 no responses were received.

2015

The School District of  
Palm Beach County

# PROCEDURE MANUAL '14-15

EXCERPTS



This document was prepared by the Department of Adult & Community Education (DACE). Thanks to all members of DACE who took the time to review and provide input on assessment procedures and overall document improvement.

School District of Palm  
Beach County  
Department of Adult &  
Community Education  
4200 Purdy Lane  
Palm Springs, FL 33461

**Updated March 23, 2015**



## SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

### Introduction

The School District of Palm Beach County, Department of Adult & Community Education (DACE) has put together the Procedure Manual in order to provide **guidance to administrators and persons with test administration, student placement and data entry responsibilities** in our adult education programs. These procedures will ensure that all of our programs are operating in a coordinated manner to ensure the highest degree of student achievement and data integrity.

### Overview of State Policy

An overview of state and federal policies is as follows:

- All newly enrolled students must be pretested within the first 12 hours of instruction.
- Programs reporting into the NRS (National Reporting System) require assessments that are approved by the United States Department of Education (USDOE) and Florida Department of Education (FDOE).
- Programs must comply with test publishers' recommended timeframes for posttesting (see Table 1 for FDOE and USDOE requirements).
- In certain limited cases, instructors and test administrators, based on their professional judgment, may request an exception to the test publishers' recommended time-frames for posttesting an adult learner, but the administrator or designee must approve and provide documentation of student progress.
- Completion of the Adult and Secondary Education ASE high functioning level is demonstrated by completing the required course work to earn the adult high school diploma or passing the GED® tests. These students are not required to posttest.
- Students who are tested in multiple skill areas must be placed and tracked in each subject area that the pre-test places students, as determined by scale scores on the standardized assessment (with the exception of reading and listening tests for ESOL programs).
- Students enrolled in the Adult ESOL course are required to test in reading and listening skill areas. Use the reading score to establish and report to FDOE. Use the lower score of reading or listening to assign the student to a classroom that provides instruction at the level of the lower score. Submit both reading and listening test information to the FDOE in accordance with FDOE instructions for reporting.

## SECTION VI: Virtual Education

### NRS Reporting Procedures for Distance Education (Virtual Education)

Distance Education is a formal learning activity where students and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both for the majority of the instructional period. Distance learning materials are delivered through a variety of media including, but not limited to, print, audio recording, videotape, broadcasts, computer software, web-based programs and other online technology. Teachers support distance learners through communications via mail, telephone, e-mail or online technologies and software.

#### Definition of Virtual Learners

Virtual learners are students who receive over 51% of their instruction online and as defined above. For learners who receive both virtual education and traditional classroom instruction during a program year (such as a blended distance/classroom approach or concurrent enrollment in both types of instruction), the student should be counted either as a virtual student or a traditional student, not both, based on which instructional modality was used the majority of the time.



Virtual programs are available for ABE, GED®, and ESOL classes. All schools must facilitate the registration for students who choose to take any of these programs online. For questions regarding these programs, contact the Department at 561-649-6023.



- Student Requirements for Placement in Virtual Programs
- Must be withdrawn from K-12 day school
- Must be at least 16 years old
- Must have an email address, access to a computer, and access to the internet
- Must meet minimum test score requirements

	Test/Level	Minimum Test Scores
ABE	TABE Level E or M	Reading score of 3.0 for placement in the program
GED®	TABE Level D or A	Reading, Math, Language scores of 9.0
ESOL	CASAS B level test or higher (83R, 83L, 84R, 84L, or higher)	Reading <b>and</b> Listening scores of 201

**Criteria for Enrollment and Federal Reporting Purposes – 12 Hour Rule**

Students in distance education courses, like those in courses using traditional instructional methods, must have 12 hours of contact within those courses before they can be counted for federal reporting purposes. Contact hours for distance learners can be a combination of actual contact and contact through telephone, video, teleconference or online communication, where student and program staff can interact and through which learner-identity is verifiable.

**NRS Implementation Guidelines For Assessment Of Distance Education Students**

Programs must administer all pretests and posttests used to measure the educational gain of distance education students for NRS reporting in person, at a proctored program site, in accordance with the FDOE policies outlined in this technical assistance paper. Assessments not conducted through face-to-face interaction with a trained test administrator in a secure setting are not allowed for NRS reporting. Students in distance education should be post-tested after the same amount of instructional time as other students.

**Reporting Assessment Data of Distance Education Students for NRS Purposes**

Data on distance education students should be included in overall totals for all NRS tables as appropriate. Students who complete more than 51 percent of their instruction online will be reported in NRS Table 4C. Students enrolled in courses using traditional instructional methods 50% or more are reported in NRS Table 4. However, data on distance educational programs must be disaggregated and reported separately in NRS Table 4C and NRS Table 5A to the FDOE. Only distance education students are to be reported in these tables, and all contact hours associated with distance education students are to be reported in NRS Table 4C.

## REFERENCES

Center for Applied Linguistics – CAL

- BEST Literacy Test Manual; 1984
- BEST Plus Technical Report; 2005

Comprehensive Student Assessment System – CASAS

- Assessment Policy Guidelines; 2005
- Technical Manual; 3rd Edition; 2004
- Test Administration Manual – Life and Work Listening; 2009
- Test Administration Manual – Life and Work Reading; 2005

National Reporting System for Adult Education Implementation Guidelines; USDOE

Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing; American Education Research Association, American Psychological Association and National Council on Measurement in Education; 1999

Tests of Adult Basic Education; (TABE 9/10) Technical Report; CTB McGraw-Hill

Measuring Educational Gain in The National Reporting System for Adult Education, 34 C.F.R. Part 462

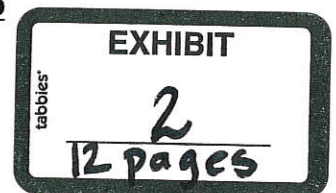
Florida Adult and Technical Distance Education Consortium (FATDEC) <http://www.fatdec.com>

2015

The School District of  
Palm Beach County

# PROCEDURE MANUAL '15-16

EXCERPTS



## SECTION VII: Virtual Education

### NRS Reporting Procedures for Distance Education (Virtual Education)

Distance Education is a formal learning activity where students and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both for the majority of the instructional period. Distance learning materials are delivered through a variety of media including, but not limited to, print, audio recording, videotape, broadcasts, computer software, web-based programs and other online technology. Teachers support distance learners through communications via mail, telephone, e-mail or online technologies and software.

#### Definition of Virtual Learners

Virtual learners are students who receive over 51% of their instruction online and as defined above. For learners who receive both virtual education and traditional classroom instruction during a program year (such as a blended distance/classroom approach or concurrent enrollment in both types of instruction), the student should be counted either as a virtual student or a traditional student, not both, based on which instructional modality was used the majority of the time.



Virtual programs are available for ABE, GED®, and ESOL classes. All schools must facilitate the registration for students who choose to take any of these programs online. For questions regarding these programs, contact the Department at 561-649-6023.



- Student Requirements for Placement in Virtual Programs
- Must be withdrawn from K-12 day school
- Must be at least 16 years old
- Must have an email address, access to a computer, and access to the internet
- Must meet minimum test score requirements

	Test/Level	Minimum Test Scores
ABE	TABE Level E or M	Reading score of 3.0 for placement in the program
GED®	TABE Level D or A	Reading, Math, Language scores of 9.0
ESOL	CASAS B level test or higher (83R, 83L, 84R, 84L, or higher)	Reading <b>and</b> Listening scores of 201

#### Criteria for Enrollment and Federal Reporting Purposes – 12 Hour Rule

Students in distance education courses, like those in courses using traditional instructional methods, must have 12 hours of contact within those courses before they can be counted for federal reporting purposes. Contact hours for distance learners can be a combination of actual contact and contact through telephone, video, teleconference or online communication, where student and program staff can interact and through which learner-identity is verifiable.

This document was prepared by the Department of Adult & Community Education (DACE). Thanks to all members of DACE who took the time to review and provide input on assessment procedures and overall document improvement.

School District of Palm  
Beach County  
Department of Adult &  
Community Education  
4200 Purdy Lane  
Palm Springs, FL 33461

**Updated August 11, 2015**

**NRS Implementation Guidelines For Assessment Of Distance Education Students**

Programs must administer all pretests and posttests used to measure the educational gain of distance education students for NRS reporting in person, at a proctored program site, in accordance with the FDOE policies outlined in this technical assistance paper. Assessments not conducted through face-to-face interaction with a trained test administrator in a secure setting are not allowed for NRS reporting. Students in distance education should be post-tested after the same amount of instructional time as other students.

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Data on distance education students should be included in overall totals for all NRS tables as appropriate. Students who complete more than 51 percent of their instruction online will be reported in NRS Table 4C. Students enrolled in courses using traditional instructional methods 50% or more are reported in NRS Table 4. However, data on distance educational programs must be disaggregated and reported separately in NRS Table 4C and NRS Table 5A to the FDOE. Only distance education students are to be reported in these tables, and all contact hours associated with distance education students are to be reported in NRS Table 4C.



# 2015-2016 Adult Virtual Program Technical Assistance Guide

Department of Adult and Community Education, Palm Beach County

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## Adult Virtual Program (AVP) Introduction

The Adult Virtual Program enables adults no longer enrolled in public high school to register for courses that provide them with knowledge and skills needed at work, at home, and in the community in order to compete in today's global society. AVP ensures that all adult students have access to quality online learning opportunities that can help prepare them for a lifetime of success. Adult virtual programs are available for ABE, GED®, and ESOL.

The program provides numerous benefits to the adult population by expanding course offerings and offering customized and personalized learning. For the adult ESOL learners, the program helps them obtain the basic skills they need to be productive workers, family members, and citizens. For the ABE/GED® adult learners, the program helps them gain the knowledge and skills needed to enter and succeed in postsecondary education and/or the job force.

## Definitions

### Virtual

A virtual student is one who actively participates in an ESOL or ABE/GED® program through our online platform. The student studies at his/her own pace and has access to the program 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. A virtual student is defined as a student who attends more than 51% of his/her program online. Time commitment is a minimum of 10 hours a week for this program. The virtual program consists of:

- Courses delivered through a virtual platform
- Graded assignments with instructor feedback
- Virtual workshops
- Downloading materials for offline work (worksheets)
- Researching online
- Working in support web programs online
- Phone calls with the instructor
- Email/text contact with the instructor
- Additional Emails to follow up with student requests/questions
- One-on-one tutoring online with the instructor as needed
- Career Counseling
- Working in Lynda.com

### Face-to-Face

A face-to-face student is one who actively participates in an ESOL or ABE/GED program at a school site. The student attends regularly scheduled classes at the designated time. Time commitment is a minimum of 8-12 hours a week depending on the school site.

### Computer Lab Time

Lab time is considered a service and part of a face-to-face program. Students who utilize lab time before, during, or after class; or work on computers at home, are not considered virtual students.

### Dual Enrollment

While unusual, a student might request to enroll in a virtual and face-to-face program at the same time. Students who dual enroll need to understand that there is an 8-12 hour time commitment for their face-to-face program each week and a 10-12 hour commitment for their virtual program each week. Please contact Dr. Jane Bravo at the Department (649-6010) in those cases. The virtual lead instructor will work with the site coordinator to schedule post-testing of dual enrolled students.

In the case of a student who wants to attend face-to-face classes but can only attend once a week, that student is registered in the face-to-face program. If the same student wants to also attend online classes, that student is also registered in the virtual program. The student is responsible for meeting the attendance requirements of both programs in order to stay active in each. The \$30 term registration fee covers the cost for both programs.

## Enrollment Criteria

Criteria for enrolling into an adult virtual program states that the student:

- Must be withdrawn from K-12 day school
- Must be at least 16 years old
- Must have an email address, access to a computer, and access to the internet
- Must meet minimum test score requirements listed below

	Test/Level	Minimum Test Scores For Placement in the Program
ABE	TABE Level E or M	Reading score of 3.0
GED	TABE Level D or A	Reading, Math, Language scores of 9.0
ESOL	CASAS B level test or higher (83R, 83L, 84R, 84L)	Reading <b>and</b> Listening scores of 201

## Materials Needed

Students enrolling in the **ESOL** program will be provided with a headset from the school site. The Department distributes these to the school sites.

## Registration Process

### New Student Registration Process

1. Student fills out Registration Form #1700 and Learner's Rights & Responsibilities Form #2523) at the school site.
2. Student pays \$30 per term (cash or check) at the school site.
3. Student is given a card with contact information for Adult Virtual Academy at the time of registration.
4. **The school site will scan the registration form #1700 and Learner's Rights & Responsibilities Form #2523 and send them to [adultedvirtual@palmbeachschools.org](mailto:adultedvirtual@palmbeachschools.org) each night, even if the student has not yet tested.**
5. Student takes CASAS or TABE test at the school site.
6. **Adult Virtual Academy staff fills out Course Enrollment Form #1701. The school site does not complete this form.**
7. For students that qualify for Virtual ESOL classes: on the same day student takes the CASAS test, the student receives a Burlington English headset from the school site (issued by the department to schools). This is a loan and students need to understand that they are to return the headset at the end of the term. Virtual instructor will advise student on headset use.
8. **Adult Virtual Academy staff enters student into TERMS and enrolls student in the correct course code and virtual section number.**
9. Within 48 hours of receiving scanned documents from the school, virtual instructor contacts student to begin the virtual program (including use of Burlington English headsets).

### Returning Student Registration Process

1. Student fills out Registration Form #1700 and Learner's Rights & Responsibilities Form #2523 at the school site.
2. Student pays \$30 per term (cash or check) at the school site. If student has a Post Test Permission Slip, site must post-test student.

3. The school site will scan the registration form #1700 and Learner's Rights & Responsibilities Form #2523 and send them to [adultedvirtual@palmbeachschools.org](mailto:adultedvirtual@palmbeachschools.org) each night.
4. Returning ESOL students are not issued another headset.
5. Adult Virtual Academy staff fills out Course Enrollment Form #1701.
6. Adult Virtual Academy staff enters student into TERMS and enrolls student in the correct course code and virtual section number.
7. Within 48 hours of receiving scanned documents from the school, virtual instructor contacts student to continue the virtual program.

## Attendance

Attendance in a virtual program is flexible and allows learning to take place at any time – day or night. Attendance is calculated based on specific task completion for a given time period. Students will need to complete 3 tasks each week (Monday through Sunday) to be considered in attendance for the week. If the student does not complete the required number of tasks, then he or she is considered as not in attendance for that week. Attendance is based on the following academically related activities:

- Responding to teacher emails/phone calls/text
- Contacting the teacher by email/phone/text
- Attending a virtual tutoring session
- Attending a virtual webinar
- Logging in to the program
- Submitting assignments
- Working with a Career Counselor (MyCareerShines)
- Logging into Lynda.com
- Any task or interaction that can be *electronically* documented and contributes to student engagement will be used for recording attendance.

Instructors will verify student attendance on academically related activities on a weekly basis in SharePoint. When a student has not completed at least 3 activities in a week, the student will be considered absent for that week of classes. **The Adult Virtual Academy's data processor will be responsible for updating the student attendance in TERMS.**

### Start Date

The start date for a student will be the first time the student responds to the virtual instructor's outreach during the term. If there is outreach and response during registration week, the start date will be the first day of class. If there is outreach and no response, the start date will be the first time the student has contact with the instructor.

### Withdrawal Date

If a student does not complete 3 activities during the week (Monday-Sunday), he/she will be considered inactive and marked absent for that week. Students with two weeks of consecutive absences (not completing 3 activities each week) will be withdrawn.

## Post-Testing

The virtual instructor determines when to send virtual students back to the school site for post-testing. If testing is needed, the student will have a permission slip (see Appendix H of the DACE Procedure Manual) to test from their virtual instructor and they will present it to the school via print, phone, or tablet. For Dual Enrolled students, the virtual instructor and school designee (together) will determine when to post-test the student.

## Course Access

A student's log-in access will be kept active for the term in which they are registered in order to provide the student with the option of logging in and becoming active at any time during the term.

Virtual students have access to their courses from the time they start until the day before the first day of registration week of the following term. Access is stopped the day before registration begins and is started once the student registers for the new term. For example: a student registers and is contacted and responds during Term 1 (Sept-Dec). This student can continue to work virtually until the day before the first day of the next registration in Term 2 (January).

Instructors will actively work with students during the scheduled class dates for each Term. For the time between terms, students will continue to have access to their courses, but will not have access to an instructor. For example: a student registers and is working during Term 1. Instructor support is provided during class dates (Sept.-Dec.). Instructor support is not provided during the time between classes (Dec.-Jan.).

In an effort to enhance retention of the virtual students during this time, emails are pre-written and scheduled to send via the Boomerang extension for Gmail. These emails are scheduled and sent every Tuesday and Thursday of the weeks that instructors are not working.

## Course Content

All programs used in the virtual program are aligned to the FDOE Adult Education Curriculum Frameworks.

Course	Program Used	Support Material
ABE	FATDEC – ITTS (McGraw Hill) HMH (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt)	eFolders, Lynda.com, MyCareerShines
GED®	HMH (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt)	eFolders, Lynda.com, MyCareerShines
ESOL	Burlington English	EASY 123, Lynda. Com, MyCareerShines

## Career Counseling

When students enroll in virtual classes, an online counselor is available to meet with them and perform an initial assessment to help them develop a personal career plan. This includes discussing the students' goals, exploring career possibilities, and helping them make plans for their future. Florida's MyCareerShines is one tool that is used for this career planning, along with the Career Pathways course from Burlington English.

## Orientation

Part of the intake process for virtual students includes instructors providing an orientation in which the experience of learning online, and what is needed to manage challenges successfully, are discussed. The orientation also covers time commitments, software and hardware requirements, and how to set up the student's computer environment. This orientation is provided online by the instructors.

## Accountability and Reporting

Each instructor keeps track of academically related activities for each student on a spreadsheet in SharePoint and is responsible for reporting attendance accurately.

To ensure accuracy of data, the lead instructor will use a TERMS report from the Department to verify that only active students are listed in TERMS. If students who should have been withdrawn appear on the report, the lead instructor will notify the Adult Virtual Academy's data processor to withdraw the student.

## Statewide Standardized Assessments

All students enrolled in the adult virtual education ABE/GED® and ESOL programs are pre- and post-tested with approved state designated assessments (TABE and CASAS). The adult virtual program follows the guidelines in the FDOE Adult Education Assessment Technical Assistance Paper and the SDPBC Department of Adult Education Procedure Manual.

### **Pre-test Guidelines**

All students are pre-tested within the first twelve (12) hours of instruction. The Initial EFL is determined by pretesting on an approved standardized test.

### **Post-test Guidelines**

Students are post-tested based on the guidelines and timeframes described in the FDOE Adult Education Assessment Technical Assistance Paper and the SDPBC Department of Adult Education Procedure Manual.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Adult education students with disabilities are responsible for self-identification and for requesting any accommodation they may need. Adult education students are also responsible for submitting documentation of their disability.

Students fill out an Explanation Learners Rights and Responsibility form (2523) when registering as one way of self-identifying and requesting an accommodation. Possible testing accommodations are listed in the FDOE Adult Education Assessment Technical Assistance Paper.

### **Instructor Certification Requirements**

As per section 1012.39 (1), F.S., each school district shall establish the minimal qualifications for part-time and full-time teachers in adult education programs. SDPBC Policy 3.85 (4) states that for adult and career program teachers, as provided by Florida law, a bachelor's degree or the appropriate license and/or verifiable work experience is required.

## Virtual Staff Responsibilities

Staff	Responsibility
Department Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet weekly with Lead Instructor</li> <li>Ensure sufficient and appropriate training of personnel</li> <li>Oversee data and accurate reporting</li> <li>Review data and student records to ensure compliance</li> <li>Provide support to staff to ensure effectiveness by all in meeting the needs of online students</li> </ul>
Lead Instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attend weekly meetings with Manager</li> <li>Oversee data and accurate reporting of instructors to ensure compliance</li> <li>Maintain accurate reporting records on SharePoint</li> <li>Receive scanned documents and place students with an instructor within 48 hours</li> <li>Assign students to instructors</li> <li>Provide consistent guidance to staff during personnel changes</li> <li>Provide ongoing training for instructors (new and seasoned)</li> <li>Provide support to ensure instructor effectiveness and success in meeting the needs of online students</li> <li>Work with Admin. Support to ensure accuracy of data reported in TERMS</li> <li>Communicate with schools as needed</li> </ul>
Instructors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome phone call to students</li> <li>Post course announcements to webpage</li> <li>Maintain accurate student records</li> <li>Utilize asynchronous and synchronous tools to augment course content</li> <li>Orient students to course and communicate course requirements</li> <li>Maintain regular office hours</li> <li>Conduct instructional sessions</li> <li>Conduct conferences with students</li> <li>Individualize instruction to help each student achieve educational objectives</li> <li>Attend meetings/trainings with Lead Instructor</li> <li>Lead at least 1 online workshop each month</li> <li>Co-moderate at least 1 workshop each month</li> </ul>
Admin. Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain student spreadsheet with attached documents on SharePoint</li> <li>Maintain accurate data in TERMS</li> <li>Contact schools as directed by Lead Instructor</li> <li>Provide support to Lead Instructor</li> <li>Provide excellent customer service to students requesting information about the online program</li> </ul>

## Effectiveness and Efficiency of Operations

The effectiveness of the program can be measured by determining if the resources used have a positive effect on achievement. The virtual program measures student attainment by literacy completion points (LCPs) gained between a student's pre- and post-test scores. Performance targets are set by the state and the virtual program's goal is to reach all state performance targets for each educational functioning level. LCP's are tracked on a per term basis for the virtual students.

The efficiencies of the virtual program are:

- Fits students' schedules: students can work and study when it is best for them (24/7)
- Saves time and money: avoid commuting
- Students control their pace: individualized instruction
- Fits students' location: can work on course anywhere



From: **Joseph Lee** <[joseph.lee@palmbeachschools.org](mailto:joseph.lee@palmbeachschools.org)>  
Date: Mon, May 4, 2015 at 4:38 PM  
Subject: Virtual Student Data  
To: Geoff Mckee <[geoff.mckee@palmbeachschools.org](mailto:geoff.mckee@palmbeachschools.org)>

Good afternoon, Dr. McKee:

This is just a reminder that as of today, the virtual students have not been entered into TERMS. This needs to be completed no later than Friday, May 15.

Please let me know how we may assist. Do not hesitate to contact me should you need additional information.

Thank you.

**Joseph M. Lee, Ed.D.**  
Assistant Superintendent  
Educational Alternatives & Interventions  
3300 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-201  
West Palm Beach, Florida 33406  
PHONE [\(561\) 434-8813](tel:(561)434-8813); FAX [\(561\) 357-1112](tel:(561)357-1112)  
E-Mail [joseph.lee@palmbeachschools.org](mailto:joseph.lee@palmbeachschools.org)



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**From:** on behalf of Dawn Hitchon  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 27, 2015 12:41 PM  
**To:** susan.hobson@palmbeachschools.org;Jane.Bravo@palmbeachschools.org  
**Cc:** geoff.mckee@palmbeachschools.org;lynn.strayer@palmbeachschools.org  
**Subject:** Re: Winter Term Data

Jane,

The students attached have been added to the Winter Term for Virtual under Boca High Adult(0962). I have one student on this list that is a Boca Middle Adult student,. I did not enter Student 27711589-Hugo Navarro. Please let me know if there is anything else.

Have a Great Day!!

On Thu, May 21, 2015 at 8:10 AM, Susan Hobson <[susan.hobson@palmbeachschools.org](mailto:susan.hobson@palmbeachschools.org)> wrote:

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Jane Bravo Novak <[jane.bravo@palmbeachschools.org](mailto:jane.bravo@palmbeachschools.org)>  
**Date:** Wed, May 20, 2015 at 4:51 PM  
**Subject:** Winter Term Data  
**To:** Susan Hobson <[susan.hobson@palmbeachschools.org](mailto:susan.hobson@palmbeachschools.org)>  
**Cc:** Jane Kim <[jane.kim@palmbeachschools.org](mailto:jane.kim@palmbeachschools.org)>

Sue,

Attached is the list for the winter term with the Course Numbers. Let me know if you need anything else.

**Dr. Jane Bravo**

Manager, Curriculum / Special Projects

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