

By Senator Diaz

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1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to virtual instruction programs;
 3 amending s. 1002.45, F.S.; removing a requirement that
 4 a virtual instruction program provider document that
 5 it locates an administrative office or offices in this
 6 state, requires its administrative staff to be state
 7 residents, and requires all instructional staff to be
 8 Florida-certified teachers; providing an effective
 9 date.

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 11 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 13 Section 1. Paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of section
 14 1002.45, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

15 1002.45 Virtual instruction programs.—

16 (2) PROVIDER QUALIFICATIONS.—

17 (a) The department shall annually publish online a list of
 18 providers approved to offer virtual instruction programs. To be
 19 approved by the department, a provider must document that it:

- 20 1. Is nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies,
- 21 employment practices, and operations;
- 22 2. Complies with the antidiscrimination provisions of s.
- 23 1000.05;

24 3. ~~Locates an administrative office or offices in this~~
 25 ~~state, requires its administrative staff to be state residents,~~
 26 ~~requires all instructional staff to be Florida-certified~~
 27 ~~teachers under chapter 1012 and~~ Conducts background screenings
 28 for all employees or contracted personnel, as required by s.
 29 1012.32, using state and national criminal history records;

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30 4. Provides to parents and students specific information
31 posted and accessible online that includes, but is not limited
32 to, the following teacher-parent and teacher-student contact
33 information for each course:

34 a. How to contact the instructor via phone, e-mail, or
35 online messaging tools.

36 b. How to contact technical support via phone, e-mail, or
37 online messaging tools.

38 c. How to contact the administration office via phone, e-
39 mail, or online messaging tools.

40 d. Any requirement for regular contact with the instructor
41 for the course and clear expectations for meeting the
42 requirement.

43 e. The requirement that the instructor in each course must,
44 at a minimum, conduct one contact with the parent and the
45 student each month;

46 5. Possesses prior, successful experience offering online
47 courses to elementary, middle, or high school students as
48 demonstrated by quantified student learning gains in each
49 subject area and grade level provided for consideration as an
50 instructional program option. However, for a provider without
51 sufficient prior, successful experience offering online courses,
52 the department may conditionally approve the provider to offer
53 courses measured pursuant to subparagraph (8)(a)2. Conditional
54 approval shall be valid for 1 school year only and, based on the
55 provider's experience in offering the courses, the department
56 shall determine whether to grant approval to offer a virtual
57 instruction program;

58 6. Is accredited by a regional accrediting association as

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59 defined by State Board of Education rule;

60 7. Ensures instructional and curricular quality through a
61 detailed curriculum and student performance accountability plan
62 that addresses every subject and grade level it intends to
63 provide through contract with the school district, including:

64 a. Courses and programs that meet the standards of the
65 International Association for K-12 Online Learning and the
66 Southern Regional Education Board.

67 b. Instructional content and services that align with, and
68 measure student attainment of, student proficiency in the Next
69 Generation Sunshine State Standards.

70 c. Mechanisms that determine and ensure that a student has
71 satisfied requirements for grade level promotion and high school
72 graduation with a standard diploma, as appropriate;

73 8. Publishes for the general public, in accordance with
74 disclosure requirements adopted in rule by the State Board of
75 Education, as part of its application as a provider and in all
76 contracts negotiated pursuant to this section:

77 a. Information and data about the curriculum of each full-
78 time and part-time program.

79 b. School policies and procedures.

80 c. Certification status and physical location of all
81 administrative and instructional personnel.

82 d. Hours and times of availability of instructional
83 personnel.

84 e. Student-teacher ratios.

85 f. Student completion and promotion rates.

86 g. Student, educator, and school performance accountability
87 outcomes;

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88 9. If the provider is a Florida College System institution,
89 employs instructors who meet the certification requirements for
90 instructional staff under chapter 1012; and

91 10. Performs an annual financial audit of its accounts and
92 records conducted by an independent certified public accountant
93 which is in accordance with rules adopted by the Auditor
94 General, is conducted in compliance with generally accepted
95 auditing standards, and includes a report on financial
96 statements presented in accordance with generally accepted
97 accounting principles.

98 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2022.