



# Innovative Synchronous Blended Learning and Real-Time Student Assessment

Technical-Assistance Webinar

September 17, 2021



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# Presentation Outline

- Innovative Synchronous Blended Learning Pilot Program
- Eligibility Criteria
- Application Template
- Assurances
- Questions and Answers

## Innovative Synchronous Blended Learning Pilot Program

- Passed by the 2021 Legislature in Senate Bill 1108.
- Purpose is to develop innovative blended learning opportunities and to measure student progress *on a weekly basis*.
- To foster innovation and narrow achievement gaps.

## Innovative Synchronous Blended Learning Pilot Program

- Innovative synchronous blended learning defined as “a mode of learning where in-person and remote students are combined in one classroom environment where the education, instruction and engagement occurs at the same time with the teacher and other students physically present in the classroom.”
- For a given course, students learn in part through online delivery of content and instruction with some element of student control over time, place, path or pace and in part at a traditional supervised classroom location away from home.

# Who is Eligible?

- School districts designated as academically high-performing, pursuant to s. 1003.621, F.S.
  - Two consecutive school district grades of “A”; no school with a grade of “F”; compliant with class-size requirements; no material audit findings.
- Charter schools designated as high-performing, pursuant to s. 1002.331, F.S.
  - Two consecutive school grades of “A”, or two school grades of A and nothing lower than a “B” for the previous three years; no material audit findings.
- Charter school systems designated as high-performing, pursuant to s. 1002.332, F.S.

# Eligible Criteria

- Eligible charter schools and charter school systems must include with their application the letter from the Commissioner of Education declaring the school or system has attained high-performing status.
- Eligible school districts must include with their application the most recent annual report it submitted to the State Board of Education and the Legislature, pursuant to section 1003.621(4), F.S.

# Application Template

- Eight question prompts that address the applicant's plan and capacity for synchronous blended learning, its instructional strategies, and its plan for progress monitoring with an aim toward reducing achievement gaps, among other requirements.
- Applicants must also describe in detail how they will protect the privacy of students learning in a remote location.

# Assurances

**Assurance 1:** The applicant must ensure that distance learning will always be at the choosing of the student or the student's parent or guardian, and that a family will never be coerced to choose distance learning. The applicant must further ensure that all of the distance learning will be synchronous with live instruction.

**Assurance 2:** The applicant must ensure that a participating classroom may not be fully virtual such that at least two-thirds of the students in a class must be present for in-person learning on any regularly scheduled school day.

**Assurance 3:** The applicant must ensure that any struggling student who is participating in this program and who, according to progress monitoring, data is on pace to learn less than a year's content in a year's time must return to learning in person.

## Assurances – Cont.

**Assurance 4:** The applicant must ensure that any student can choose to switch learning modalities in person or distance, on any given day, without notice, and therefore a seat must always be available for every student registered to take any participating course.

**Assurance 5:** The applicant must ensure that it will provide all requested student-level data from participating schools, including, as necessary, benchmark historical data for up to the prior three school years, to the Florida Department of Education upon request.

**Assurance 6:** The applicant must ensure that students with Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) are provided needed services and supports in alignment with the IEP to ensure receipt of a free and appropriate education. The applicant must ensure that IEP teams are appropriately determining needed services and supports, including compensatory services, regardless of learning modality and have a process in place to document the provision of those services and supports pursuant to statutory requirements.

# Other Requirements

- Only proposals for synchronous innovative blended learning will be considered.
- Applicants approved by the Commissioner shall receive funding based upon the number of full-time equivalent students (FTE), as if each student were being educated full-time in-person at his or her school.
- Approved applicants that fail to meet the requirements in statute *will* be removed from the program.
- This is a pilot program that runs, pursuant to statute, until July 1, 2024.

# Questions & Answer

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