



THE GADSDEN COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Educating Every Student Today, Making Gadsden Stronger Tomorrow

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Table of Contents

GCSD's Home Education/Virtual Instruction Program	pg. 1
Vision, Mission, Core Beliefs	pg. 1
State Requirements for Virtual Education	pg. 2
Guidelines and Procedures for Virtual Instruction	pg. 3
Enrollment & Termination	pgs. 3-4
Portfolio & Evaluation	pg. 4
Review of Evaluation & Extra Curricular Activities.....	pg. 5
Bright Futures & Dual Enrollment	pg. 6
Guidelines for Returning to GCPS	pgs. 6-9
High School Completion	pgs. 9-10
Attendance Requirements and Recording	pg. 10
Student Progression.....	pg. 10
Accessibility for All Students	pg. 11
Quality Control.....	pg. 11

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Gadsden County School District's Virtual Instruction Program

Gadsden County's Virtual Instruction Program is open to all eligible students within the Gadsden County School District. GCVIP is an innovative educational experience that is implemented in an interactive learning environment created through a unique use of technology and collaborative partnerships. The Gadsden County School District (GCSD) remains steadfast to a commitment of "Educating Every Student Today, Making Gadsden Stronger Tomorrow", which includes ensuring that all students have access to an adequate education. Furthermore, GCSD calls for all stakeholders to join in accountability of adhering to established standards and abiding by the vision, mission and core beliefs of our beloved district.

Vision

The Gadsden County Public Schools comprise a system of excellence that prepares ALL students to live and successfully compete in a global society.

Mission

The mission of Gadsden County Public Schools is to collaborate with and engage all stakeholders in providing safe, caring, rigorous and engaging environments in which students can learn and succeed

Core Beliefs

The Gadsden County School District believes that:

- all students will learn when instruction is engaging, rigorous, differentiated and individualized.
- learning environments must be safe and supportive;
- schools exist to foster the development and well-being of the whole child;
- understanding and respecting diversity enriches students' lives;
- every student has a right to a high quality education;
- success requires shared responsibility, collaboration and communication among all staff, families, students and the community;
- engaged families combined with highly effective teachers and school leaders are the central components of a successful school;
- positive character education is essential to whole child development;
- high-quality customer service is a critical component of high-quality education;
- everyone must be held to the highest ethical standards to achieve excellence;
- everyone must contribute to and be held accountable for student achievement; and
- all district services must clearly be linked to student achievement.

State Requirements for Virtual Education

Each virtual instruction program under this section must:

- (a) Align virtual course curriculum and course content to the state academic standards under s. 1003.41.
- (b) Offer instruction that is designed to enable a student to gain proficiency in each virtual instruction course of study.
- (c) Provide each student enrolled in the virtual instruction program with all the necessary instructional materials.
- (d) Provide each full-time student enrolled in the virtual instruction program who qualifies for free or reduced-price school lunches under the National School Lunch Act, or who is on the direct certification list, and who does not have a computer or Internet access in his or her home with:
 - 1. All equipment necessary for participants in the virtual instruction program, including, but not limited to, a computer, computer monitor, and printer, if a printer is necessary to participate in the virtual instruction program; and
 - 2. Access to or reimbursement for all Internet services necessary for online delivery of instruction.
- (e) Not require tuition or student registration fees.

Student Eligibility – A student may enroll in a virtual instruction program provided by the school district or by a charter school operated in the district in which he or she resides if the student meets eligibility requirements for virtual instruction pursuant to F.S. 1002.455.

A. Guidelines and Procedures for the Home Education Program

1. ENROLLMENT/TERMINATION

The parent shall notify the district school superintendent of the county in which the parent resides of her or his intent to establish and maintain a home education program. The notice shall be in writing, signed by the parent, and shall include the names, addresses, and birthdates of all children who shall be enrolled as students in the Home Education Program. The Home Education program may be a traditional program as defined by the Florida Department of Education or one of the approved District virtual providers (FLVS, K12 Education, or Gadsden County Virtual Franchise). The notice shall be filed in the district Family and Community Engagement (FACE) office within 30 days of the establishment of the home education program. A written notice of termination of the Home Education Program shall be filed in the FACE office within 30 days after said termination. The parent shall notify the district school superintendent, or designee, of the county in which they reside of her or his intent to establish and maintain a home education program.

➤ Criteria for Eligibility

- All students, including home education and private school students, are eligible to participate in any of the following virtual instruction options:
 - School district operated part-time or full-time kindergarten through grade 12 virtual instruction programs;
 - Full-time virtual charter school instruction authorized under s. 1002.33 to students within the school district or to students in other school districts throughout the state;
 - Virtual courses offered in the course code directory to students within the school district or to students in other school districts throughout the state;
 - Florida Virtual School instructional services.

➤ **Methods to Enroll**

- Students may apply for participation in GCSD Home Education/Virtual Instruction Program using the following methods:
 - Obtain and submit an application to the district’s Family And Community Engagement Office at (850) 627-9651, ex. 1252 or 35 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd., Quincy, Fl 32351.
 - Submit application online via district’s homepage.

There are **three (3) enrollment periods** that will be offered throughout the academic year. Even though specific dates vary based on the start dates for the school year, enrollment will be at least 90 days in duration and conclude 30 days prior to the first day of school or term per F.S. 1002.455.

➤ **Application Process**

- Application and Letter of Intent submission.
- Letter of Eligibility or Ineligibility distribution.
- Registration for district’s instruction provider (*District Virtual Instruction Provider: K12 Education* or *District Franchise of FLVS: PAEC FLVS*), if applicable.
- Enrollment begins. (See Appendix for dates of enrollment for providers)

2. PORTFOLIO

The parent shall maintain a portfolio of records and materials. The portfolio shall consist of the following:

- i. a log of educational activities that is made contemporaneously with the instruction and that designates by title any reading materials used and
- ii. samples of any writings, worksheets, workbooks, or creative materials used or developed by the student. The portfolio shall be preserved by the parent for 2 years and shall be made available for inspection by the district school superintendent, or the district school superintendent’s agent, upon 15 days’ written notice. Nothing in this section shall require the district school superintendent to inspect the portfolio.

3. EVALUATION

The parent shall provide for an annual educational evaluation that documents the student’s demonstration of educational progress at a level commensurate with her or his ability. The parent shall select the method of evaluation and shall file a copy of the evaluation annually with the district FACE office in the county in which the student resides. The annual educational evaluation shall consist of one of the following:

- i. A teacher selected by the parent shall evaluate the student’s educational progress

upon review of the portfolio and discussion with the student. Such teacher shall hold a valid regular Florida certificate to teach academic subjects at the elementary or secondary level.

- ii. The student shall take any nationally normed student achievement test administered by a certified teacher.
- iii. The student shall take a state student assessment test used by the school district and administered by a certified teacher, at a location and under testing conditions approved by the school district.
- iv. The student shall be evaluated by an individual holding a valid, active license (as a school psychologist) pursuant to the provisions of s. 490.003 (7) or (8), F.S.; or
- v. The student shall be evaluated with any other valid measurement tool as mutually agreed upon by the district school superintendent or designee of the district in which the student resides and the student's parent resides.

4. REVIEW OF EVALUATION

The district school superintendent or designee shall review and accept the results of the annual educational evaluation of the student in a Home Education program. If the student does not demonstrate educational progress at a level commensurate with her or his ability, the district school superintendent or designee shall notify the parent, in writing, that such progress has not been achieved. The parent shall have 1 year from the date of receipt of the written notification to provide remedial instruction to the student. At the end of the 1-year probationary period, the student shall be reevaluated as specified in s. 1002.41 (1) (c), F.S. Continuation in a Home Education Program shall be contingent upon the student demonstrating educational progress commensurate with her or his ability at the end of the probationary period.

5. EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

A home education student is eligible to participate in interscholastic extracurricular student activities at a public school. An extracurricular activity is any school-authorized or education-related activity occurring during or outside the regular instructional school day. A home education student must be able to participate in curricular (class) activities if that is a requirement of the extra-curricular activity, such as marching band. Home school students may only participate at their attendance area school. (s. 1006.15(3) (a), F.S.)

- a. The student must meet the requirements of the Home Education Program (s. 1002.41, F.S.).
- b. During the period of participation, the Home Education student must demonstrate educational progress in all subjects taken in the Home Education Program by a method of evaluation agreed upon by the parent and the school district which may include the following:
 - review of the student's work by a certified teacher chosen by the parent,
 - grades earned through correspondence,
 - grades earned in courses at a post-secondary institution, or
 - standardized test scores above the 35th percentile, or any other method in s. 1002.41 (1) (c), F.S.
- c. The student must meet the same residency requirements as other students in the school at which he or she participates. Home school students may only participate at their attendance area school.
- d. The student must meet the same standards of acceptance, behavior, and performance as required of other students in extracurricular activities.
- e. The student must register with the school his or her intent to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities as a representative of the school before the beginning date of the season for which the activity in which he or she wishes

to participate. A Home Education student must be able to participate in curricular activities (school courses) if that is a requirement for an extracurricular activity.

- f. A student who transfers from a Home Education Program to a public school before or during the first grading period of the school year is academically eligible to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities during the first grading period provided the student has a successful evaluation from the previous year.
- g. Any public school or non-public school student who has been unable to maintain academic eligibility for participation in interscholastic extracurricular activities is ineligible to participate as a Home Education student until the student has successfully completed one grading period in Home Education fulfilling the requirements for interscholastic extracurricular eligibility (s. 1006.15 (3) (a) 2, F.S.) to become eligible to participate as a Home Education student.

Any insurance provided by the district school boards for participants in extracurricular activities shall cover the participating Home Education student. If there is an additional premium for such coverage, the participating Home Education student shall pay the premium (s.1006.15 (7), F.S.).

6. BRIGHT FUTURES SCHOLARSHIP

Students who have participated in a Home Education Program according to s. 1002.41, F.S., registered with the district during grades 11 and 12, and have met the SAT or ACT test score requirements for Home School Programs are eligible to participate in the Bright Futures Scholarship Program in accordance with the provisions of ss. 1009.534-1009.563, F.S.

7. DUAL ENROLLMENT

Home Education students may participate in Dual Enrollment Programs in accordance with the provisions of ss. 1007.27 (4); 1007.271 (10), F.S. Home Education students are not eligible to participate in Dual Enrollment through the Gadsden County Public Schools' articulation agreements. Home Education students must enter into their own articulation agreement with the college or university. Home Education students may participate in credit by examination per s. 1007.27 (1), F.S.

<p>FLORIDA STATUTES AND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RULES GOVERNING THE HOME EDUCATION PROGRAM WHERE INSTRUCTION IS PROVIDED TO STUDENTS GRANTED EXEMPTION FROM COMPULSORY PUBLIC-SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.</p>

B. Guidelines and Procedures for Students Who Have Left the Home Education Program to Return to Gadsden County Public Schools

1. GRADE PLACEMENT PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS LEAVING HOME SCHOOL AND ENTERING GADSDEN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN GRADES K-5

- a. **KINDERGARTEN PLACEMENT:** A student who enters a Gadsden County Public School from a kindergarten Home Education Program must meet the entrance requirements for kindergarten as outlined in Section I: Enrollment and Promotion

within the Elementary School in the Student Progression Plan.

- b. **FIRST GRADE PLACEMENT:** With appropriate documentation of satisfactory completion of a Home Education Program **and** verification that the student meets the age requirement for entrance in to first grade, a student shall be provisionally placed in a first-grade class.
- c. **SECOND THROUGH FIFTH GRADE PLACEMENT:** With appropriate documentation of satisfactory completion of a Home Education Program, a student may be provisionally placed in the regular program for these grades. This provisional placement will be validated before the end of the first 45 days in the program as follows:
 - i. A recently completed home education evaluation completed by a state certified educator, **and**
 - ii. The judgment of the teacher(s) to whom the student is assigned that the grade placement is correct. This judgment will be based on the student's classroom performance as outlined in Appendix C, **or**
 - iii. A minimum Grade Equivalent score on a district approved assessment, aligned to state grade level benchmarks.

NOTE: The final determination will be based primarily on classroom performance and not on a single test score.

2. GRADE LEVEL PLACEMENT PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS LEAVING HOME SCHOOL AND ENTERING GADSDEN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN **GRADE 6**

With appropriate documentation of satisfactory completion of a Home Education Program, a student may be provisionally placed in the regular program for 6th grade. This provisional grade level placement will be validated before the end of the first 45 days in the program as follows:

- a. A recently completed home education evaluation completed by a state certified educator, **and**
- b. The judgment of the teacher(s) to whom the student is assigned that the grade placement is correct. This judgment will be based on the student's classroom performance as outlined in Appendix C, **or**
- c. A minimum Grade Equivalent score on a district approved assessment, aligned to state grade level benchmarks that falls within the average percentile range for that grade level.

NOTE: The final determination will be based primarily on classroom performance and not on a single test score.

3. GRADE LEVEL/COURSE PLACEMENT PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS LEAVING HOME SCHOOL AND ENTERING GADSDEN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN **GRADES 7 AND 8**

With appropriate documentation of satisfactory completion of a Home Education Program, a student may be provisionally placed in the regular program for grades 7 and 8.

- a. This provisional grade level AND course placement will be validated before the end of the first 45 days of enrollment.

- b. Validation of courses/grades/credits will be based on performance in classes at the receiving school. The judgment of the teacher(s) to whom the student is assigned will determine if the grade level/course placement is correct. **If a student has a minimum grade point average of 2.0 at the end of the first 45 days of enrollment, further validation of grade/course placement and acceptance of grades/credits will not be necessary.**
- c. If a student does not earn a 2.0 GPA by the end of the first 45 days of enrollment, further validation is required. Validation methods may include the following:
 - i. Portfolio evaluation by the superintendent or designee,
 - ii. A passing score of 60% or higher on a District End-of -Course Exam (EOC) can be used to demonstrate mastery, to assign a grade, and to receive course credit. [To determine course mastery, assign a grade, and award credit(s) for courses without an EOC, a teacher-made test, benchmark assessments, if appropriate, and/or any other valid measurement tool shall be used for validation.].
 - iii. Written recommendation by a Florida certified teacher selected by the parent and approved by the principal.
 - iv. Demonstrated proficiencies on I Ready/Achieve 3000; or
 - v. Demonstrated proficiencies on the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) in appropriate subject areas.

Note: Students must be provided at least 90 days from the date of enrollment to prepare for validation assessments outlined above.

- e. Awarding of credit is limited to courses available in the State Course Code Directory.
- f. **Students transferring from a Home Education Program into the Gadsden County Public Schools may accrue credits in one school year that exceed the number of credits that may be accrued through the Student Progression Plan.**
- g. Students cannot be promoted to Grade 9 without official documentation of courses/grades/GPA earned in grades 6 -8.

NOTE: The final determination will be based primarily on classroom performance and not on a single test score.

4. GRADE LEVEL/COURSE PLACEMENT PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS LEAVING HOME SCHOOL AND ENTERING GADSDEN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN **GRADE 9**

- a. With appropriate documentation of satisfactory completion of a Home Education Program, a student may be provisionally placed in the regular program for these grades.
- b. This provisional grade level/course placement will be validated before the end of the first 45 days of enrollment as follows:
- c. The judgment of the teacher(s) to whom the student is assigned that the grade placement is correct. This judgment will be based on the student's classroom performance as outlined in Appendix C, **or**
- d. A minimum Grade Equivalent score on a district approved assessment, aligned to state grade level benchmarks that falls within the average percentile range for that grade level.

NOTE: The final determination will be based primarily on classroom performance and not on a single test score. If a student has a minimum grade point average of 2.0 at the end of the first 45 days of enrollment further validation of grade level/course placement will not be necessary.

5. GRADE/LEVEL COURSE PLACEMENT PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS LEAVING HOME SCHOOL AND ENTERING GADSDEN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN **GRADES 10 – 12**

With appropriate documentation of satisfactory completion of a Home Education Program, a student may be provisionally placed in the regular program for these grades.

- a. This provisional placement will be validated before the end of the first 45 days of enrollment in the program.
 - i. Validation of course grades/credits will be based on performance in classes at the receiving school. The judgment of the teacher(s) to whom the student is assigned will determine if the grade placement is correct. This judgment will be based on the student's classroom performance as outlined in Appendix C. **If a student has a minimum grade point average of 2.0 at the end of the first 45 days of enrollment, further validation of credits will not be necessary.**
 - ii. If a student does not earn a 2.0 GPA by the end of the first 45 days of enrollment, further validation is required. Validation methods may include the following:
 - Portfolio evaluation by the superintendent or designee.
 - A passing score of 60% or higher on the District's End-of-Course Exam (EOC) may be used to demonstrate mastery, to assign a grade, and to receive course credit. [To determine course mastery, assign a grade, and award credit(s) for courses without an EOC, a teacher-made test, district benchmark, if appropriate, or any other valid measurement tool shall be used for validation.].
 - Demonstrated proficiencies on I Ready/Achieve 3000;
 - Written recommendation by a Florida certified teacher selected by the parent and approved by the principal;
 - Demonstrated proficiencies on nationally normed standardized subject area assessments, such as the SAT Subject Area Tests; or
 - Demonstrated proficiencies on the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) in appropriate subject areas.

Note: Students must be provided at least 90 days from the date of entry to prepare for validation assessments outlined above.

- b. Awarding of credit is limited to courses available in the State Course Code Directory.
- c. **Students transferring from a Home Education Program into the Gadsden County Public Schools may not accrue credits in one school year that exceed the number of credits that may be accrued through the Student Progression Plan.**

NOTE: The final determination will be based primarily on classroom performance and not on a single test score.

C. **High School Completion/Diploma**

1. To receive a four-year, 24-credit standard high school diploma, a transfer student must pass the Grade 10 Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST), or an alternate assessment as provided by Florida law and earn a 2.0 GPA in courses taken in a Florida public school, specified in s. 1008.22 (3), F.S. Twelfth grade students transferring into GCPS with ninety (90) or fewer school days left of the school year may receive their diplomas from the school from which the student transferred.
2. School districts are not authorized to award a diploma to a Home Education Program student. However, a home education student may take the General Education Development (GED®)

test at an education center, such as Gadsden Technical College (GTC) Assessment Centers and be awarded a GED® diploma by the State of Florida, if the student receives a passing score.

3. To qualify for a Florida Bright Futures Scholarship, a student must have been enrolled in home school his junior and senior years at the minimum.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS & RECORDING

➤ Compulsory Attendance Requirements

- All students enrolled in GC-VIP are mandated to adhere to the compulsory attendance requirements mandated by the state of Florida and prescribed by the GCSD Student Code of Conduct. Florida law requires each parent/guardian of a child from age six (6) to sixteen (16) years to be responsible for the child’s school attendance. Regular attendance is the actual attendance of a pupil during the school day as defined by law and regulations of the state board. A student is considered “truant” when he/she is not in attendance without approval of the principal and/or consent of parent /guardian. School-based interventions will occur for all truant students. A student is considered a “habitual truant” when he/she has 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days. Minors who fail to satisfy attendance requirements are ineligible for driving privileges (322.091 F.S.) and parents with qualifying students may be subject to the Learn Fare program (414.1251(1)) F.S.

➤ Attendance Recording Expectations

- All providers will be required to consistently record and maintain reports regarding student attendance, potential truancy issues, and/or chronic absenteeism so that early, proactive intervention measures can be assumed to support the student. Ultimately, the parent/guardian is responsible for ensuring that students enrolled in the GC-VIP attendance is recorded accurately.

➤ Attendance Audits

- During each 9-week period of the school year, the VIP providers shall provide attendance documents and documentation as part of the attendance audit. This audit will require that all virtual education instructors provide a list of students that have missed a substantial amount of instruction time and/or have made little progress in terms of course completion to the Home Education Coordinator. The student and his/her family will be asked to work with the district’s coordinator, as well as with the support of the virtual educator, to develop an action plan to resolve the issue(s).

STUDENT PROGRESSION

GCSD’s Student Progression Plan establishes the procedures and requirements regarding students progressing from one grade to another. Requirements related to student progress, including retention, promotion, and grade assignment, are the same for GCSD’s home education/virtual instruction students as they are for other students enrolled in the district.

ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL STUDENTS

Students with disabilities are not restricted from participating in the home education/virtual instruction program. Current Individual Education Plans (IEP) of applicants who meet the entrance criteria will be evaluated on an individual basis to determine the appropriateness of the home education/virtual instruction program. According to the Florida Department of Education, district virtual instruction programs are choice options and are not required to fundamentally change their instructional programs to meet the needs of every student with a disability.

QUALITY CONTROL

➤ Contractual Agreements

- Only VIP providers approved by the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) will be considered for the contracts with the GCSD. All contractual agreements will clearly address the following provisions:
 - Student/teacher ratio
 - Data quality requirements
 - Security controls
 - Quality of instruction

➤ Review Process

- The district's VET will conduct an annual review of all virtual offerings and adjust in course offerings, vendors/providers, and district-wide implementation framework as needed. This process may be initiated the January prior to the implementation year. Using the guidelines and provider qualifications outlined in the Florida Statutes 1002.45(2)(3), the GCSD will meticulously vet each potential vendor. Following the vetting process, a vendor will be selected, and the contract negotiation process will begin. The district will use the contract template provided by the FLDOE as the model for all virtual education contractual agreements. Contracts should be finalized by late spring/early summer prior to the year of implementation.

➤ Program Evaluation

- The currently adopted virtual education program and processes will be evaluated semi-annually to ensure adherence to current statutory provisions and assess how effective the program is towards meeting the needs of the learning community. The program evaluation, conducted by the VET, will consist of acquiring and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data to ensure that it correlates with the identified goals and objectives outlined and defined by the VET. While the program evaluation will be an ongoing and systematic process, a thorough analysis of the program shall be conducted at the close of the academic year.

➤ Materials & Resources

- Within the first 20 days of each academic year, the district will verify receipt of instructional materials and resources for those students enrolled in the virtual instruction program. Every family enrolled in Gadsden County's Virtual Instruction Program will be contacted and required to complete verification. Forms may be submitted via email, mail, or online submission.