



Florida Virtual School

INSTRUCTIONAL CONTINUITY PLAN

Introduction

On rare occasions, it may be necessary to close schools due to weather or other emergency situations. Due to Florida Virtual School's position as a leader in online education, we are uniquely equipped to help students and parents navigate these periods of disruption and ensure they have access to quality online content and digital education. The Instructional Continuity and Safe In-Person Return to Operations Plan from Florida Virtual School provides information about the educational options available for the 2023-2024 school year. The Instructional Continuity objectives are:

- Ensure essential functions can be performed under all conditions.
- Reduce or mitigate disruptions to operations.
- Execute a successful order of succession in the event a disruption renders the organization's leadership unable, unavailable, or incapable of assuming and performing their responsibilities of office.
- Execute the organization's timely and orderly recovery and reconstitution from an emergency.



The Instructional Continuity Plan (ICP) has multiple components: Academics, Technology, Operations and Communications.

The Safe Return to In-Person Operations Plan addresses the extent to which FLVS has adopted the key prevention and mitigation strategies recommended by the CDC.

Academics

FLVS utilizes lesson plans created by our highly qualified curriculum development team utilizing digital media, interactives, and simulations to meet students where they are, and allow them to proceed at their own pace to master the content. Through our Learning Management System, Educator, FLVS utilizes both live lessons and pre-planned digital lessons ensuring that our students can remain engaged in their learning, even in the event of disruption.

The Learning and Development Team at FLVS is responsible for setting new teachers up for success by providing them with a thoughtful, intentional onboarding experience. The New Teacher Training (NET) program provides teachers with best practices for instructing students in an online environment. During the one-year onboarding experience, teachers learn how to use different technology platforms and software systems to deliver instruction and track student success. These professional learning opportunities provide valuable insight into becoming an online teacher. The program incorporates opportunities to collect and analyze participant feedback to inform future decisions related to planning and implementing professional learning opportunities for new teachers at FLVS.



Academics (continued)

As a digital curriculum provider, a computer with internet access is required to participate in the curriculum. Title I and Title IX funding provide homeless families that do not have adequate access to the internet a “hot spot” so that students can complete assignments, assessments and gain academic support from instructional staff. More information can be found at: <https://www.flvs.net/about/programs/mckinney-vento-homeless-assistance-improvement-act>.

We realize that families may need additional assistance in addition to the support programs offered through the Florida Department of Education. Through the FLVS Foundation, FLVS offers a Laptop Learner Program to assist families in need receive a device they can use for online education. More information is available here: <https://www.flvsfoundation.org/programs/student-access-and-achievement/laptop-loaner-program>.

FLVS Full Time school staff values families and promotes collaboration through the Parent and Family Engagement plans, home-school compacts, and monthly family engagement events. All events are posted through our FOCUS portal, which keeps families informed, in their native language, of activities that would benefit families in supporting their child’s education. Monthly events include topics of interest that were submitted by families through the end-of-year evaluation surveys.

The Parent Liaisons, School Social Worker, Student Services, Exceptional Student Education (ESE) staff, and English Language Learner (ELL) Coordinators help with scheduling events on topics of interest to meet the needs of all families at FLVS. All events are recorded and posted for later viewing by those who might have missed the live sessions. Parents are encouraged to give feedback regarding the Family Engagement program through quarterly SAC meetings where PFEPs, survey results, and school-wide data are reviewed. Staff is trained annually on the importance of parental involvement and the benefits of communication with families. The full time staff attends professional development opportunities on family engagement strategies. These staff members then share evidence-based strategies and best practices with other staff members through schoolhouse meetings.

Technology

Florida Virtual School (FLVS) has been leading the way in Kindergarten-12 online education for more than 25 years. FLVS provides a robust, award-winning curriculum to public, private, charter, and homeschool families and school districts nationwide. Founded in 1997, FLVS, the district, and its schools are accredited by Cognia and offer supportive online learning to students both in Florida and around the world. FLVS employs a full time Information Technology department offering day-to-day administration, troubleshooting, and maintenance of server systems throughout the enterprise, to ensure that critical systems can be updated and restored with minimal downtime for our students. FLVS also has a well-established Help Desk to assist families and students that can be found here: <https://help.flvs.net/help/submitting-a-help-ticket>.

As part of that commitment to our students, FLVS incorporates inclusive development standards and guidelines to ensure our courses are accessible to all students. FLVS complies with Section 508, an amendment to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that provides standards for accessible technology. In addition, FLVS also supports the “Web for All” philosophy of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) by implementing development practices recommended in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)2.0.

If an exceptional education student who has an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) applies to enroll in a full time virtual program, the virtual program will determine if the student meets the profile for success in this educational delivery context. If comparable services are not available or not appropriate in a full time online environment, or if FLVS Full Time has concerns that a full time online setting may not be the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) for the student, then other educational options will be discussed during the application process.



Technology (continued)

As an exclusively digital district, FLVS has a comprehensive Information Security Team following NIST Cybersecurity Framework to protect FLVS from cyber threats. FLVS staff receives trainings annually on identifying and reporting potential cyber security threats. Our security systems are routinely tested, including simulated responses to cyber-attacks, in order to identify and strengthen any potential exposures in our security framework.

In addition to meeting the needs of our own students, FLVS also is actively involved in supporting other school districts in delivering online education. Our digital courses are designed to be easily integrated into a variety of Learning Management Systems utilized by other districts. FLVS also offers virtual teacher training for school districts that wish to train their teachers in the FLVS online platform.

Operations & Communications

All departments have annually reviewed and updated policies and procedures in place to maintain operations in response to unexpected events that require an extended shut down of our facilities. When necessary, all Florida Virtual School departments can function remotely ensuring that we can operate at full capacity even in the event of disruptions.

FLVS maintains a comprehensive disaster plan on file that details each departments responsibilities in case of an emergency, and outlines procedures for providing communications. FLVS utilizes an emergency text alerts system to deliver rapid emergency communication by SMS text to designated geo-located audiences (e.g., Virtual Learning Center (VLC), VLC's Surrounding Counties, All Staff) and deliver these type of emergency communications to FLVS staff using the emergency text alerts system. The emergency text alerts system does not replace current departmental policies and procedures currently in place and serves as a back up to communication sent out to all staff through FLVS email.

Parents and students can communicate directly with their teachers through Educator and teachers are available via phone five days a week. In addition to this, staff is available via phone, email, or social media to aid families, and our website <https://www.flvs.net/> has live chat to speak with a representative, plus several articles to address the frequent concerns of our students.

How To Report COVID-19 Exposure Following an In-Person FLVS Event

Employees

All FLVS team members are required to report a positive COVID-19 test to his/her immediate supervisor following an in-person FLVS event. Supervisors/managers shall report the exposure immediately to the FLVS Office of Professional Standards by emailing HRProfessionalStandards@flvs.net.

Parents/Guardians/Students

If FLVS parents/guardians/students report a positive COVID-19 test following an in-person FLVS event, the FLVS team member is required to report the exposure to his/her immediate supervisor. Supervisors/managers shall report the exposure immediately to the FLVS Office of Professional Standards by emailing HRProfessionalStandards@flvs.net.

Safe Return to In-Person Operations

FLVS is committed to providing a safe and clean environment and asks employees to do their part to keep everyone healthy as the pandemic continues.



FLVS is closely monitoring the course of the virus and will be updating this information periodically. We will be surveying students, parents, and staff to receive feedback on any potential changes or improvements to the information presented here. CDC Adopted Prevention and Mitigation Strategies.

Mask Requirements

Face covering (masks and face shielded) are optional and voluntary for all students and adults in FLVS facilities.

Modification to Facilities to Allow for Physical Distancing

FLVS has transferred a significant portion of our staff to remote work and staggered staff usage of the VLC to limit exposure. FLVS will be following all CDC guidelines to establish best practices regarding physical distancing at our workplace.

Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette

FLVS staff attending face-to-face in-service training have been provided personal protective equipment including hand sanitizer. Employees are encouraged to follow CDC guidelines for all in-person events.

Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

FLVS is in the process of moving to a new facility that will utilize open-ended shared spaces for in-person meetings. In addition, FLVS is reducing the amount of in-person employees housed at the VLC.

Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments

FLVS is a unique school district in the state of Florida. We employ a mostly virtual workforce. Most in-person events at Florida Virtual School are optional, with a virtual option presented to those that do not feel comfortable attending. As positive COVID tests are already reported to the Florida Department of Health, and due to the dispersed nature of our events, and with guidance from NEFEC Risk Managers, conducting contact tracing is not applicable.

- Diagnostic and screening testing
- Providing vaccinations to school communities
- Coordination with State and local health officials
- Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies

FLVS is a virtual learning environment servicing students across all of Florida. As our community is dispersed across the state, and in-person events are infrequent and most are not mandatory, these recommendations are not applicable.

