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MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Superintendents

FROM: Manny Diaz, Jr.

DATE: October 2, 2024

SUBJECT: Hurricane Helene Guidance

Thank you for supporting students, families and educators during this time, especially for the districts impacted by Hurricane Helene. This memo is intended to provide you with guidance due to Hurricane Helene; please let us know if we can provide additional information.

Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order (EO) 24-209 on September 24, 2024, amending EO 24-208 and declaring a state of emergency for 61 counties because of the severe threat posed by Hurricane Helene. Multiple districts in Florida have experienced significant impacts from this system.

The department has compiled the following guidance based on questions shared by school districts related to Hurricane Helene. School district personnel should direct questions to the contacts for each section listed below.

Survey 2 Reporting

The Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) General Instructions publication establishes the attendance window for reporting FTE student enrollment as the five days during survey week which is October 7, 2024, through October 11, 2024, and the six days prior to survey week that schools were in session. However, an alternative attendance window is available to districts impacted by the hurricane. Each school district that was closed for at least one day due to the hurricane between September 27 and October 11 may use an alternative attendance window. The alternative attendance window is the 11 days that schools were in session immediately preceding Thursday, September 26, 2024. Charter schools must use the attendance window selected by the district in which they are located. Currently, the department does not anticipate waiving any instructional hours.

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Contact: Shawna Reid
Executive Staff Director, Division of Technology and Innovation
Shawna.Reid@fldoe.org
850-245-9070

Progress Monitoring (PM) 1 Assessment Window

Due to school closures, the Fall 2024 testing windows have been extended.

- **PM1 (K–2 and 3–10):** will now end on October 4.
- **Fall 2024 EOCs and FAST Retake:** will now end on October 11.

Districts with unique circumstances may contact the Division of Accountability, Research and Measurement.

Contact: Jenny Black
Director, Test Administration, Bureau of K-12 Student Assessment
Jenny.Black@fldoe.org
850-245-9470

Enrollment for Displaced Students

For questions related to student enrollment, immunizations, age verification or transcripts, please contact the Office of Student Services.

Contact: Dr. Andrew Weatherill
Senior Director, Student Services
Andrew.Weatherill@fldoe.org
850-245-7840

Supports for Students with Disabilities

To the extent possible, districts should follow existing procedures regarding transfer students according to [Rule 6A-6.0334, Florida Administrative Code](#). If records are not available, accept and document the parent/guardian's statement that the student is a student with a disability. Based upon the information available, determine the most appropriate placement and program, obtain parental consent for services, develop an individual educational plan (IEP), provide services as soon as possible, and continue to request the records. Monitor the student's progress, proceed with consent for initial evaluations and eligibility procedures, and provide the parent with procedural safeguards.

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Contact: Alice Schmitges
Chief, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services
Alice.Schmitges@fldoe.org
850-245-0903

Financial Matters

The program period for the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief (ESSER) fund ended on September 30, 2024. Several local educational agencies (LEAs) have indicated that their ability to obligate remaining funds by issuing contracts or purchase orders was interrupted due to the closures caused by the hurricane, and these districts have requested an extension of the program period for these funds. The department does not currently have the authority to extend the program period for ARP ESSER, but has reached out to the U.S. Department of Education to request the authority to provide such extensions.

Contact: Miki Presley
Special Projects, Division of Finance and Operations
Mari.Presley@fldoe.org
850-245-9426

Purple Star Schools and Districts Application

The [application](#) due date has been extended from September 30 to October 30. For more information, please contact the Bureau of Family and Community Outreach.

Contact: Dr. Andria Cole
Chief, Bureau of Family and Community Outreach
Andria.Cole@fldoe.org
850-245-9470

CMD/pld