Policy & Operations Manual

2026-2027

<<SD_Name>>

Authored by <<Author>>

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Overview

The «SD_Name» partnership with Graduation Alliance is designed to help students living within the district's boundaries or service area who cannot or will not attend an existing district school or program. The program provides a student support network that helps locate and enroll dropouts, as well as other at-risk students identified by the district, to provide a flexible and supportive learning program through which they can reach their graduation goals. Students in the program are enrolled in the Educational Alternative Outreach Program and complete classes toward a diploma from the Educational Alternative Outreach Program.

The «SD_Name» Graduation Program Policy & Operations Manual, 2026-2027, is intended to guide school administrators and operators in the day-to-day academic policies and operations of the District's Graduation Alliance Program, powered by Graduation Alliance, for the 2026-2027 school year.

Mission Statement

The mission of the district's Graduation Alliance Program is to provide a flexible, high- quality educational program to the high school-age students in the District who have not yet earned high school diplomas and who, for a variety of reasons, cannot or will not participate in the District's traditional or alternative face-to-face programs.

Authorization and Governance

The «SD_Name» Graduation Alliance Program is authorized by «SD_Name» County Public School Board in Florida. The Program is operated by Graduation Alliance, an education services organization based in Salt Lake City, UT. The relationship between «SD_Name» and Graduation Alliance is governed by an Agreement between the «SD_Name» County Public Schools and Graduation Alliance, signed and agreed to on «Date_Signed».

The administration of the provisions of the Agreement between the «SD_Name» and Graduation Alliance will be overseen by:

- «Name», «Title», «SD_Name»
- Abby Perkins, Program Manager, Graduation Alliance, «program_Manager_Email_»

Admissions

Student Enrollment Approval

Students must be approved by the District designee to be eligible for the program. Enrollment is open for admission in the program at any time.

Program Pathways

Students participating in the Graduation Alliance Program are classified as diploma-seeking students. In addition to submitting official transcripts of previous work for credit and the requirement to fulfill the District's published diploma requirements, diploma-seeking students will have access to college and career counseling services.

Residency

In-State Students

Only students who are residents of the state of Florida are eligible to participate in the District's Graduation Alliance Program.

In-District Students

Students who reside within the District's geographic boundaries must be approved by the District's administrators in order to participate in the Graduation Alliance Program.

Out-of-District Students

Students who do not reside within the District's geographic boundaries may be accepted into the Graduation Alliance Program. «SD_Name» is responsible for following and documenting state requirements for out-of-district student transfers.

Age Restrictions

The District's Graduation Alliance Program is open to high school-age students. High school age is defined by «SD_Name» to be «min_age». Additionally, students must have completed 8th grade on the first day of school to participate in the program.

Non-English Native Language Speakers

Graduation Alliance strives to support students who have been identified by their home district as having English learning (EL) needs. Based on the students' English language proficiency level, as provided by the district, accommodations and a curriculum built on Universal Design for Learning principles are a few ways to support EL learning needs in a virtual setting. In addition, all students have opportunities to access one-to-one tutoring

support and academic interventions. The district remains responsible for all EL assessments, including initial placement and annual state requirements. Further, any additional EL services, as defined by federal and state law, will be provided by the district. In addition, the district remains responsible for addressing the translation and interpretation request needs of parents whose primary language is other than English.

English Learner Identification and Support

Students who have previously received ESOL services will be identified by the district on the referral list sent to Graduation Alliance for outreach. To assist the district partner in meeting district, state, and federal English as a Second Language (ESOL) requirements, Graduation Alliance (GA) will include ESOL service status as part of its records for effective communication with the district. Students will be identified as an English Learner within the GA administration portal and through exportable student reports, allowing the district to identify students with potential and ongoing ESOL needs. As part of the district's process for students previously receiving ESOL services, the district will perform any evaluations needed to comply with state law and determine students' eligibility for ongoing ESOL services. Following the district's review of each individual student marked as an English Learner, the district will inform the GA Program Manager which students qualify as students with ESOL needs, which students have been dismissed from ESOL services, or which students have language learner needs that require more intensive services or supports as determined by the English Language Learner committee.

The GA Program Manager will serve as the liaison between the district and the GA staff members to streamline the ESOL identification process, enrollment, and ongoing support needs. The district should communicate directly with the GA Program Manager regarding ESOL identification, sharing district-provided student English Learning Plans and/or accommodation needs, and requesting GA teacher input or attendance at an English Learner Plan development or review meeting. Upon receipt from the district, the GA Program Manager will contact the appropriate internal GA contact(s) to fulfill the needed request as promptly as possible.

Exceptional Student Education

Students who are in need of special education services in order to be successful in their schoolwork will obtain services through the District. The administrators of the Graduation Alliance Program will cooperate with the District's ESE personnel in providing information and data about courses and student performance, as required. To ensure that students referred for placement in the District's Graduation Alliance Program have a skill set that will allow them success, the following process will prove helpful.

1. All students will be referred to building-level gatekeepers
2. Gatekeepers will send all names to the ESE Department to screen for ESE services.
3. If a student has an IEP or 504, further evaluation of the student's likelihood for success will occur in the ESE Department.
4. ESE Department will approve or deny the recommendation.
5. If approved:
    a. Gatekeeper will refer student to GA for recruitment
    b. ESE Department will review IEP for any changes that may need to occur
    c. Student will continue to receive specially designed instruction from the district during school hours

Non-discrimination Policy

Admission to the district Graduation Alliance Program is not determined on the basis of age, race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or veteran status, with the exception that students must be high school-age, as defined by the state of Florida, and meet the state's definition of high school dropout in F.s. 1003.01(09) in order to participate.

Florida Educational Equity Act

Discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, religion, or marital status against a student or an employee in the state system of public K-20 education is prohibited. No person in this state shall, on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, disability, religion, or marital status, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any public K-20 education program or activity, or in any employment conditions or practices, conducted by a public educational institution that receives or benefits from federal or state financial assistance.

Student Enrollment Requirements

Enrollment into the District's Graduation Alliance Program is subject to satisfactory completion of the following:

- Online Student Enrollment Form
- Student Honor Code
- Terms of Use
- Financial Responsibility Form (if a laptop has been requested for the Student)
- Additional forms as required by «SD_Name»
- Additional forms as required by the state of Florida
- First class assignment

Technology Requirements

In order to participate in the District's Graduation Alliance Program, students must have reliable access to a computer with on-board internet access. A list of technical specifications is available to students prior to enrollment on the District's Graduation Alliance website.

Graduation Alliance will provide a computer and internet access to students who need them for use while they participate in the District's Graduation Alliance Program.

Denial of Participation

The District may deny participation to an applicant for the Graduation Alliance Program for the following reasons:

- Student's attendance in the Program is likely to create a risk to the health or safety of other students/staff.
- Student is currently attending the District's high school.
- Student is not a resident of the District.

Appeals Process

Students who have been denied admission to the District Graduation Alliance Program may appeal the decision. Students who wish to appeal the School's decision must inform the District superintendent in writing.

Waiting List

Enrollment into the District's Graduation Alliance Program is on a first-come, first-served basis. If the Program administrators deem that admitting students past a certain number would pose undue strain on the Program's administrative or instructional staff, students may be placed on a waiting list. Students' names will be placed on the waiting list in the order in which they complete all required Student Enrollment forms. As space becomes available, enrollment and registration decisions will be made for students in the order in which their names were placed on the list.

Athletics and Extracurricular Eligibility

Per «SD_Name», students who participate in the District's Graduation Alliance Program «Extra_Curricular»

Program Operations

Academic Calendar

Students will have access to their courses year-round as long as they are enrolled in the Program. However, Teachers, Counselors, Academic Coaches, Student Services, and Technical Support personnel are unavailable on weekends and federal holidays, including:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Presidents Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the day after (Veterans Day observed)
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

As a program offered by the District, program administrators respect the religious beliefs and practices of the administrative and instructional staff. Instructional and administrative staff will be granted leave for religious holidays. Instructional staff will give the Graduation Alliance principal and students at least one week's notice of their unavailability during those holidays.

Records Requests

Transcript requests will be made to the District using the standard District protocol unless otherwise directed by the District. District is responsible for sending the following information to Graduation Alliance within seven days of request:

- Transcript
- Credit verification for seniors
- State and district ID numbers
- Records of national standardized test attempts and scores
- Records of state standardized test attempts and scores
- Special education records (when applicable)

Enrollment Count

Attendance and Membership for the purposes of Enrollment Counts

Students must be enrolled and not withdrawn in accordance with Florida state policy to be included in Surveys 1, 2, and 3. Enrollment is established by completing all enrollment forms and the first assignment of the I Will Graduate orientation course. Equivalent attendance, based on course completion, is reported in Survey 4 at the end of the year.

For the purposes of tracking ongoing attendance and reporting truancy concerns, a student is considered enrolled and in full attendance for each week when a student either has two-way communication with a licensed teacher, Student Advocate, or teacher advisor to discuss the student's progress OR meets the defined weekly course performance targets. To meet the state's minutes of instruction requirements, students are recommended to complete 5 hours of instruction per day or 25 hours per week.

Definition of Satisfactory Progress

Students are required to complete at least .5 credit each month to maintain satisfactory progress in the program. Satisfactory progress evaluations and determinations will be made monthly by the student's academic coach. Interventions, which may include an evaluation of appropriate placement in the program, will be made with reference to the student's history of attaining satisfactory progress. Students and their parents must also have at least one monthly phone contact with a teacher in order to make satisfactory progress.

Enrollment Reviews

Prior to reporting enrollment to the districts, Graduation Alliance will review student records to ensure that students included in the enrollment report to the district meet the definition given under "Enrollment Count" above.

Enrollment Reporting

Graduation Alliance will provide a list of students who meet the criteria defined above and will be reported to appropriate district contacts within the mutually-agreed upon enrollment reporting timeframe.

Students in the online program through the district's partnership with Graduation Alliance should be reported in the same record formats as for students in other district schools and programs.

Survey 2 and 3

- Report 0000 FTE on student course records.
- Report Class minutes (Weekly) even though the reported FTE is 0000.
- VIP Provider-operated programs use school number 7001.
- Provider codes are reported on student course records; Graduation Alliance Provider Code is 320.
- Students must be coded as an R (Dropout Retrieval) in data Element 115680 to not be included in the school accountability metrics.

Survey 4

- Report all course records (successful and unsuccessful).
- Report course grade on Student Course Record.
- Report FTE > 0000 if successfully completed course.
- Report FTE = 0000 if unsuccessfully completed course.

Funding

Districts may report FTE for full-time virtual students in all FEFP programs (Basic, ESE, Career Education and ESOL). Funding for virtual education programs should be reported by the district in all appropriate surveys (*Survey 2, 3, 4) and is based on each student's successful course completion. For each virtual course (.5 credit) a student completes, the district will receive 1/12 FTE funding. Districts will receive estimated funding throughout the year from the Florida Department of Education, with final funding trued up at the end of the year after the reporting of successful completions in Survey 4.

Students who earn 6 full credits or 12 half credits are considered 1FTE for funding. Students are allowed to complete courses beyond the regular 180-day school year, in accordance with FS.1011.61(1)(c)2. The course(s) must be completed no later than the deadline for amending the final student enrollment survey for that year, typically in August. Further, students can only be funded up to 1 FTE maximum. Students not captured by the district in Survey 2 or 3 are not eligible to receive FTE funding beyond the school district's 180-day school calendar.

Pause Status

At the discretion of Graduation Alliance Program principal or designee, students may be put on “Pause” status for up to 60 days; however, extenuating circumstances may result in a Pause for longer than 60 days. Pause status is reserved for students who are unable to engage in their studies due to life events. Life events include:

- Medical issues
- Child birth
- Death of a friend or family member
- Incarceration
- Pending graduation

At the end of the Pause period, students shall be permitted to re-enter the program as long as the student meets or has already met the Attendance and Membership requirements defined above for the enrollment period.

Billing Statuses

Graduation Alliance will invoice the District monthly for half-credit courses completed by students enrolled in the program. Course completion is defined by the state as successfully completing a course with a D or better.

Part-Time vs. Full-Time Student Status

All students are full-time unless agreed upon with the District.

Part-time status (i.e., percentage FTE for enrollment reporting purposes) for students taking courses only through the Graduation Alliance program will be determined by dividing the number of credits on the learning plan by the number of credits required to be counted as full-time status when the student enters the program.

Part-time status (i.e., percentage FTE for enrollment reporting purposes) for students taking both online and face-to-face courses will be determined by dividing the number of

courses taken with Graduation Alliance by the total number of courses the student is taking, provided that the total number of courses taken equals full-time. If the total number of courses taken does *not* equal full-time status, the total number of courses in which the student is enrolled is divided by the number of credits needed for full-time status given the student’s entry period. The result of dividing the number of courses taken with Graduation Alliance by the total courses taken is then multiplied by the result of the total courses taken divided by the number of credits needed to qualify as full-time.

Teacher-Student Interactions

Graduation Alliance staff, including Teachers, Academic Coaches, and Student Advocates, may communicate with the student in any of the following ways:

- Face-to-face, individual, or group meetings (individual meetings will only take place inside a home if a parent/guardian is present)
- Telephone
- Instant messenger
- Email
- Chat
- Text message

- Social Media

Interactions with students will be logged using the Student Portal.

Course Catalog

Courses available to students enrolled in the District's Graduation Alliance Program, along with their associated credits and descriptions, are published in the course catalog on the District's Graduation Alliance Program online portal.

Course Registration

Students will work with Academic Coaches who will assist them in the enrollment, course selection, and registration process.

Course Registration Timelines

Once the student enrollment and course registration processes are complete, the student may begin their courses. The Written Learning Plan will be developed and completed as part of the student's first course.

Courses start daily, with the exception of federal holidays.

Course Fees

There will be no fees to students enrolled in the District's Graduation Alliance Program for participation, instructional materials, or transcript review.

Course Materials

Graduation Alliance will place textbook and other material orders on behalf of the student as required for the courses in which the student has been registered. Required materials will be shipped directly to the student. Optional materials will be distributed by the Student Advocate.

Laptop computers will be distributed through the student's Student Advocate or shipped directly to the student.

Course Load

The Academic Coach will work with each student in the District's Graduation Alliance Program to create the Written Learning Plan. The Written Learning Plan will prescribe the number of courses a student will take simultaneously.

Course Completion Timeline

Courses can vary depending on the subject, grade level, and student ability. In general, most courses are designed to be completed in 28 days or less. Students must make Satisfactory Progress toward their Written Student Learning Plan in order to maintain their eligibility for the Graduation Alliance Program.

Credit for Courses

Credit for coursework completed through the District's Graduation Alliance Program can be earned in a

variety of ways: percentage/letter grade; pass/fail; credit/no credit; or satisfactory/unsatisfactory.

Unless a course is specifically designated as a pass/fail, credit/no credit, or satisfactory/unsatisfactory credit course, credit is assigned by percentage/letter grade.

To earn percentage/letter grade credit for a course, students must:

- Complete coursework with a cumulative average grade of 60% or higher.
- Complete a proctored final exam.*

The proctored final exam may be taken within 30 days of completion of the last assignment in the course. If the final exam is not completed by the end of the month, the course may still be counted toward the definition of satisfactory progress provided all of the required assignments are completed before the end of the month.

*Students who have an overall grade of 80% or higher in a course will not need to complete a proctored final exam.

Optional Course Challenge

Student potential for academic success is individual. Students come to every school setting with varying levels of experience from previous academic and personal pursuits. We believe that previously acquired knowledge and skill should be accounted for in order to accelerate students to their present levels of performance.

Graduation Alliance will provide students with a means to prove their skills and abilities in courses offered through the academic program. Students may challenge a course and will receive credit for meeting an 80% standard in the course. Students who wish to challenge a course will need to apply to the Challenge Course Committee.

Variables that the Challenge Course Committee will take into account:

- Previous enrollment in an equivalent course that resulted in a no-credit situation
- Previous pass of state assessment for the course.
- Previous documented experience with the coursework that did not lead to the opportunity to earn credit.

Practices:

- Students must declare the intention to challenge prior to the start of a course.
- Students will be given access to the unit exams for the course that they wish to challenge
- Students must pass each section with an 80% pass rate.
- For each unit passed at 80% or higher, students will be given the option of applying the grade earned on the exam to the entire unit OR to retake the assignments in the unit for a higher grade.

Grade Forgiveness Policy

Students are allowed to retake required courses if they previously earned a “D” or “F” to earn a grade of “C” or higher in the same or comparable course (F.S. 1003.4282 (5)). Grade forgiveness for elective courses will be limited to replacing a “D” or “F” with a “C” grade or higher earned subsequently in another course. In all cases of grade forgiveness, only the new grade will be used in the calculation of the student’s grade point average, as calculated by the district. Students will be scheduled to retake (or replace) a course upon student request.

Dual Credit

If eligible, students who take ACE-approved courses and earn credit could earn credit at ACE-approved institutions.

Transfer Credits

The District's policy on transfer credits will apply to students participating in the Graduation Alliance Program.

Credit for Homeschool Work

The District's policy on credit for homeschool work will apply to students participating in the Graduation Alliance Program.

Credit for Life Experience

Students in the program will not receive credit for life experience.

Grading Policy

In order to receive credit for a course, students must complete all assignments in the course and take a proctored final exam. At the teacher's discretion, students may be excused from completing individual assignments.

Any unexcused assignments must be completed prior to completing the final exam.

Grade Scale/Grade Point Value

The following grade scale will be used to determine letter grades and associated point values for all Graduation Alliance courses:

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point Values
90-100%	A	4.0
80-89%	B	3.0
70-79%	C	2.0
60-69%	D	1.0
0-59%	F	0.0

Appeals Process

Students wishing to appeal a final grade in the course must follow the appeals process, including:

- Submit a written request for a detailed copy of the student's gradebook from the course teacher.
- Identify in writing any assignments that he/she would like re-evaluated.
- Explain in writing why the student believes the grade on each of the identified assignments should be revised.
- Submit identifications and explanations to the course teacher.

Teachers will respond to the student's questions in writing. The teacher reserves the right to assign a grade that is either higher or lower than the original grade. If the student is not satisfied, he/she may request an evaluation of the identified assignments by another teacher of the Program's choice. The student must submit all of the documentation from the process described above. The Program's designated evaluator's decision will be final.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

The grade point average for students in the District's Graduation Alliance Program is calculated by the district.

Class Standing

Class standing for students enrolled in the program is determined by credits as outlined in the District's student handbook.

Course Completion Certificates

Course completion certificates will be generated upon successful completion of each quarter-credit/semester course for all students. Course completion certificates can be accessed through the student portal and will also be emailed to the student.

Withdrawing from a Course

Students are permitted a grace period to withdraw from a course within the first 14 calendar days of the start of the course without penalty. Withdrawal during this period will be recorded as "W." If a course is withdrawn after the first 14 days and the overall grade at the time is less than 60%, it will be recorded on the transcript as Withdrawn-Failing "WF." If a course is withdrawn after the first 14 days and the student's overall grade at the time is more than 60%, it will be recorded on the transcript as Withdrawn-Passing "WP." No credit will be awarded for any withdrawn course.

State Standardized Testing

In order for Graduation Alliance to facilitate student attendance for standardized testing, districts must provide a list of students in the program who need to participate in testing to Graduation Alliance, as well as information about the date, times, and locations of the tests, at least 30 days prior to the test administration date. Failure to provide the necessary information can result in student non-attendance.

Students who unsuccessfully attempt the FSA will be placed in a remediation course and will work with the state testing coordinator on test-taking strategies and preparation prior to retesting.

End-of-Course Examination Grade Policy

«End_of_Course_Policy»

Withdrawing a Student from Program

Students who are approved by the District to enroll in the Graduation Alliance Program shall be permitted to continue in the program as long as they;

1. meet the count requirements of the current count period in the state in which they reside, and
2. maintain Satisfactory Progress.

District-initiated student withdrawal from or transfer out of the program must be accompanied by a Signed Transfer Consent from Student (or if Student is under the age of 18, a signed consent from the Student's parent or legal guardian) authorizing the withdrawal or transfer to another school or program.

Readmission

A student who has been withdrawn from the program and who wishes to be considered for readmission to the District's Graduation Alliance Program must apply to Program administrators.

Graduation Requirements

To earn a diploma from the District, students must complete the following requirements:

- A student must earn a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale to be awarded a standard high school diploma
- Complete the graduation requirements of «SD_Name» as outlined in Appendix B

To ensure students are enrolled and complete the necessary courses and requirements for graduation, «SD_Name» is responsible for:

1. Supplying and explaining the graduation requirements for graduation cohorts to the Graduation Alliance Counseling Department
2. Within 15 days of request, confirming the remaining classes and requirements needed for students who have 5 credits or less to graduate
3. Within 3 days of request, certifying final completion of all graduation requirements

A student who earns the required 24 credits, or the required 18 credits, as determined by the district, but fails to pass the assessments or achieve a .0 GPA should be awarded a certificate of completion. However, a student may elect to remain in high school either as a full-time student or a part-time student for up to 1 additional year to remedy the situation.

Diploma Authorization

Students who successfully complete the District and State graduation requirements will earn a diploma from «SD_Name» authorized by the «SD_Name» School Board.

Graduation Ceremony Participation

Students who participate in the District's Graduation Alliance Program«allowed_to_walk» will be eligible to participate in the District's graduation ceremonies.

Accelerated Graduation

The District's policy on accelerated graduation will apply to students participating in the Graduation Alliance Program.

Post-Secondary Transition Plan

All students participating in the Graduation Alliance Program, in conjunction with their academic coach, will develop a plan for their high school experience and one year following graduation. This plan will help students begin thinking about their futures and focus on courses they need to best prepare them for their career interests, whether those interests lead to additional schooling or directly into a vocation.

Return of Textbooks and other Materials

Graduation Alliance is responsible for the purchase of all required textbooks and materials for the courses. Upon withdrawal from the program, Graduation Alliance is solely responsible for collecting textbooks and materials.

FERPA & Student Privacy

The Program, in compliance with Federal Laws 93-308 and 93-568, presents these facts for the information of parent(s) and/or guardian(s) and students.

- The District, in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), permits parents and/or guardians or students to do the following:
- Inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access. Under state public disclosure law, the School must acknowledge the request in writing within five (5) working days, and unless the documents are presented at that time, an estimate will be provided as to when they will be available within the 45-day response period. Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) or eligible student should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected;
- Request amendment of the student's education records that the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) or eligible student believes to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's rights to privacy. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record to be amended, as well as specify why the information in question is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's rights to privacy. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible student, the School will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible student of the decision and advise them of the right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing;
- Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the

student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, teacher, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility;

- File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education under Section 99.64 concerning alleged failures by Graduation Alliance to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA follows:

  Family Policy Compliance Office
  U.S. Department of Education, 600
  Independence Avenue, SW
  Washington, DC 20202-4605

Students of majority age (over 18) will have parental rights regarding issues related to their educational program.

Disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information

Personally identifiable information (otherwise known as directory information) contained within a student's educational records will not be made public unless specifically requested by the student.

The administrators of the District's Graduation Alliance Program have done due diligence to protect students' personal information and to guard against cyber predators by using a password-protected learning management system, password-protecting and securing all computers on which student data is stored, and locking cabinets in which student records are kept.

Access to student data through the Program Portal is provided to the custodial parent/guardian on record upon request if the student is a non-emancipated minor.

Information about student records will be provided to non-custodial parents upon written request and approval by the District.

Student Code of Conduct

The District's Graduation Alliance Program administrators recognize and strive to meet the individual needs of each student through programs which promote the development of self-esteem, cooperation and vision. This expanded view of school will result in well- educated, productive, and socially responsible citizens. To this end, we believe the school should reflect the desires and expectations held by our community for our students and that the school must provide an environment that ensures the safety and well-being of students. For this reason, it is important that the school have clear expectations and guidelines for students.

Virtual Classroom Conduct

In order for a virtual classroom session to be educationally effective for students, all students should abide by a standard set of rules. The following rules govern student conduct in the virtual classroom:

- Students' written and oral communications must be free of vulgar, belittling, or offensive language.
- Students must abide by rules established by the course teacher.
- Students must comply with usage instructions communicated orally or in writing by the teacher.

Students who violate the virtual classroom rules of conduct will be warned by the teacher to correct their behavior. If the student doesn't comply with the teacher's instructions, he/she may be removed from the virtual classroom for the rest of the session or referred to the Graduation Alliance principal.

Use of Language and Images

Students must not use vulgar, obscene, abusive, or demeaning language, writing, pictures, signs, or acts in written or oral communications, including email, discussion board, listserv,

virtual classroom, student websites, or in photographs. Students are prohibited from posting content from or links to suggestive, lewd, or otherwise inappropriate websites.

Personal Respect

Teachers, administrators, and students know that personal respect is the foundation of learning. Language, comments, or images that show a lack of respect for individuals or groups will lead directly to disciplinary action.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

The District Graduation Alliance Program has a zero tolerance policy towards intimidation, harassment, bullying, and/or fighting. Intimidation, harassment, bullying, fighting, and racial and/or sexual harassment are violent acts against others.

Program administrators will promptly and thoroughly investigate reports of harassment and bullying. If it is determined that either has occurred, the Program administrators will act appropriately within the discipline codes of the School.

Harassment

No one should be subjected to harassment at school for any reason. Therefore, it is the policy of the District Graduation Alliance Program that all students will deal with all persons in ways which convey respect and dignity. Harassment in the form of name-calling, taunting, gestures, intimidation, conduct, jokes, pictures, slurs, or ridicule is prohibited. Such conduct referencing or directed at an individual or group that demeans that person/ group on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, creed, age, disability, or other extraneous factors is prohibited and shall be grounds for disciplinary action.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes all unwanted, uninvited, and non-reciprocal sexual attention as well as the creation of an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school or work environment. This can include: sexual jokes, pictures, or teasing

- pressure for dates or sex
- sexually demeaning comments

- threats, demands, or suggestions that favors will be granted in exchange for sex or tolerance of sexual advances

Academic Honesty

The District's Graduation Alliance Program expects students to complete their work to the best of their own ability. Cheating (giving or receiving information) and plagiarism on classwork may result in a zero grade for the assignment. At the teacher's discretion, students may have the opportunity to complete an additional assignment to make up lost points.

The following procedure governs identification and discipline for instances of academic dishonesty:

- Teacher notifies the student in writing that he or she has identified an instance in which the work's authorship is in question and requests that the student respond in writing within 3 school days. The teacher copies Graduation Alliance Principal on the email.
- Teacher sends the Graduation Alliance Principal an email identifying the alleged infraction and providing evidence to support the allegation. Evidence can include links to websites that have been plagiarized, references to "collaboration catchers" embedded in quizzes/exams, time and date stamps on assignments, inconsistency in quality of work, comprehension of concepts, verbal print, etc.
- Graduation Alliance Principal or designee contacts student and parent/guardian if the student is a minor.
- The student is placed on internal academic watch. Incident is reported to the student's other teachers. Student's work is routinely monitored for plagiarism.

Additional disciplinary action may be taken as deemed necessary and/or appropriate by the Program administrators.

Discipline

Discipline Philosophy

Discipline should be thought of as a learning experience with behavior modification as its objective. Unwanted behaviors are modified most easily when the school and parents work together as a team. In addition, any consequences that are used to modify unwanted behaviors should be supported at home, imposed immediately, and be firm, fair, consistent, and progressive.

Discipline Process

The most effective discipline is taught and dealt with before problems arise. It is a learning process that should be teacher-directed. That being said, when applicable, internal interventions will be utilized prior to referring students to the principal.

If a warning is ignored and the behavior continues, the student will be referred to the principal and excluded from the online classroom. The teacher will email the principal a referral that states the nature of the problem.

Within one school day of receipt of the referral, the student will write out an explanation of what caused him/her to be excluded from the online classroom and will develop a three- step plan to resolve the problem.

If the student is a minor, the administration will contact the student's parent by the parent's preferred method of contact (phone or email). If the parent receives contact by email, he or she must reply to the email acknowledging receipt of the email.

If the student has been blocked from course access, access will not be restored until the teacher has read and agreed to the student's plan.

If the student doesn't follow through with the agreed-upon plan, he/she will be referred to the principal again.

With each additional referral, the student will be assigned a consequence or a disciplinary step to be determined based on the student's behavior.

It should be noted that there are instances where this process may be altered. Behaviors such as violence toward others, bullying, harassment, intimidation, disrespect toward teachers, non-compliance, and other behaviors that a staff member deems as disruptive to an orderly learning environment may result in an automatic referral to the principal.

Appeals Process

A parent or a student has a right to appeal disciplinary action. If an appeal is desired, a letter must be received by the District office within 10 school business days (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) with an official request for an appeal hearing.

Student Inquiries

Students are encouraged to ask questions! The following guidelines define the process and appropriate contacts for common student questions.

Process

Students should submit their questions/problems via email or by phone as soon as possible.

Enrollment/Registration Support

Full-time students should contact their Academic Coach for enrollment and/or course registration support via email or phone.

Students taking Courses On-Demand through their school district should contact their local district liaison for questions regarding enrollment or registration. The district liaison will work with Graduation Alliance's Student Services specialists to resolve any questions.

Course Access and Technical Support

Students can access technical support related to course access by phone or email during regular business hours. Technical requirements are available on the Program portal and are distributed to students who are not using hardware provided by Graduation Alliance.

Academic Support

Students should contact their course teachers for questions related to course content. Contact with the teachers of core courses may take place via phone, chat, Skype, or email.

Contact with teachers of elective courses should take place via email or via the "virtual office" tool during a pre-arranged office hour with the teacher.

For questions about the timelines, processes, or technical requirements of assignments, students should refer to the Program portal.

Academic Counseling/Guidance Support

Students should contact their assigned Career & College Transition Counselor via email or phone for additional college or career counseling or guidance.

Teacher-Parent Interactions

Teachers, academic coaches, Student Advocates, and parent interactions may take place by:

- Telephone
- Instant messenger
- Email
- Chat
- Text message
- Social Media

Parents are invited to request and use the Parent Portal to view information about their child's progress and to communicate with their child's teachers and other support team members.

Use of Language/Images

Students/Parents must not use vulgar, obscene, abusive, or demeaning language, writing, pictures, signs, or acts in written or oral communications, including email, discussion board, listserv, virtual classroom, student

websites, or in photographs. Students/Parents are prohibited from posting content from or links to suggestive, lewd, or otherwise inappropriate websites.

Parent Responsibilities

Graduation Alliance recognizes that positive involvement from parents can be instrumental in the short- and long-term success of students. We ask parents to:

- Encourage your child to ask questions when they have them.
- Support your child by providing dedicated time and space for them to work.
- Communicate with your child and their academic coach and teachers about pace and progress.
- Request access to the Parent Portal - log in at least weekly to review your child's
- progress.
- Be available for the scheduled monthly phone call; if a call must be rescheduled, please do so in advance and offer a new time for the call.
- Model asking questions - reach out to us if you have one!

Instruction

Staff Qualifications

Teachers for the program must meet the following minimum qualifications:

- Hold at least a Bachelor's Degree from a regionally accredited college or university
- Hold a current teaching license in the state of Florida
- Be highly qualified in the courses they teach

Teachers' licenses will be tracked by Graduation Alliance to ensure the licenses remain current. Copies of teachers' licenses and resumes will be provided to the District upon request.

Teachers' Duties

Teachers are responsible for the overall facilitation and management of the courses to which they are assigned. Their general duties include:

- Grade student work submissions.
- Provide remediation for content area deficits.
- Provide remediation for general academic skills, reading, writing, and mathematical processes.
- Monitor and proactively reach out to students who are struggling
- Active communication with students and parents, including at least monthly progress phone calls

Course Assignments

Teachers are assigned to teach courses for which they hold current endorsements.

Highly Qualified Teachers

In accordance with the Federal definition of highly qualified teachers, the teaching staff for all core academic courses, including English, Math, Science, World Languages, Civics and Government, Economics, Arts, History, and Geography, meet the following requirements:

- Has earned at least a bachelor's degree.
- Holds full certification.
- Has demonstrated subject matter knowledge and teaching skill in each core academic subject assigned to teach.
- Communicates with students concerning academic progress via email, chat, Skype, or phone.
- Work in collaboration with other members of the student support staff team to serve each student.

Student-Teacher Ratio

Information about the student-to-teacher ratio in the District Graduation Alliance Program will be provided to the District upon request.

Professional Development

Graduation Alliance provides initial training and ongoing professional development for the

District's Graduation Alliance Program teachers on the following topics:

- Best practices in the online classroom
- Assessment and evaluation
- Communication and tracking
- Implementation of content
- Graduation Alliance policies and approach to online education
- Teacher role in student support
- LMS/SIS tools
- Classroom management and student support strategies
- New and emerging technologies
- The Teacher Evaluation and Personal Professional Development Program
- Identifying and supporting at-risk learners
- Crisis management, mandatory reporting, avoiding misconduct

Reviews and Evaluations

Clear, consistent, open, and timely performance feedback is critical to improving the quality of the Program and ultimately improving student outcomes and parent/student satisfaction. To that end, Graduation Alliance teachers participate with the Graduation Alliance principal in reviewing the teacher's performance annually as part of a formative evaluation process. An official performance review and summative evaluation is conducted each year.

Summative reviews and evaluations include: (1) a written self-evaluation, (2) a formal written evaluation by the reviewer, and (3) a synchronous discussion between the teacher and the reviewer. Written reviews and recommendations for improvement will be made available to the teacher within two weeks of the discussion. Teachers will be provided with the teacher evaluation rubric during their orientation to the School.

The Graduation Alliance principal or designee may provide formative feedback at any time based on student success data or anecdotal feedback.

Curriculum

Selection of Curriculum and Materials

The District's Graduation Alliance Program utilizes the courses offered by Graduation Alliance in their accredited private school. Graduation Alliance courses implement sound instructional theory and practice. Learning objectives, including both mastery of principles and concepts and their application, are clearly defined for each organizational unit.

Courses use a blended approach of objectivist content presentation and constructivist application of content. Course content engages student attention and provides anchors for the construction of new knowledge and schemata.

Content is presented in instructionally effective, efficient, and appealing ways; students have the opportunity to demonstrate understanding of new material and to apply the concepts to unique and relevant situations, thereby making the content their own.

Ongoing research in best practices of online course design and implementation continuously informs the course design, development, review, and revision process.

Criteria for Selection and Development

Third-party courses are evaluated against and new courses are developed using the following criteria, derived primarily from iNACOL's National Standards for Quality Online Courses and the ISTE NETS 2007 standards:

Course Organization and Structure

- The organization and sequence of content is clear and logical.
- Lessons and modules are easy to access and navigate between.
- The course structure is transparent to students.
- The organization of the course facilitates the construction of mental models and schemata.
- Lesson components include objectives, introduction and presentation of concepts, guided practice, application of concept, and assessment of understanding.
- Activities are authentic, challenging, and, where appropriate, interdisciplinary in approach.
- An organizational theme is used to enhance content and student engagement.
- Structure allows for adaptable, customizable pacing within the academic semester.

Graphic Design

- Instructional pages make use of best practices in online layout and design.
- Fonts and themes are used consistently throughout the course.
- Color schemes are applied systematically and conservatively; they enhance learning and are not distracting.
- Images are used liberally to enhance learning.

- Low-resolution images are used to ensure that students with low-bandwidth connections can view the images.
- Overall appearance is visually appealing, and the message design is clear.

Communication and Interactivity

- Students have frequent opportunities to interact with the content, with other students, and with the teacher.
- The communication process is clearly defined within the course.
- Communication tools are reliable and used appropriately.
- Requirements, rules, and expectations for student-student communication are clearly defined and modeled.

Content Quality

- Content is written at an audience-appropriate level.
- Content uses standard language and is free of slang.
- The content has depth and richness.
- Content is accurate and current.
- The tone of the text is unambiguous and engaging.
- Multimedia presentation and interactive simulations are used appropriately to reinforce mastery of concepts.
- Content images and examples reflect the multicultural world of which our students are a part.

Web Resources

- Web resources are redundant and stable.
- Resources are directly related to the content in the course.
- Resources direct students to trustworthy content sources.
- Explanations of the relevance of the resource, what the student is looking for, and how he/she knows when he/she is finished are provided.
- Resources supplement and enrich the content of the course.

Accessibility

- Courses comply with ADA Section 508 accessibility requirements
- Images have alt tags.
- Text versions of audio and flash presentations are provided.

Assessment and Evaluation

- Assessment opportunities are authentic and mapped to the learning outcomes.
- Opportunities for pre-assessment are provided (as appropriate).
- Self-checks with automated feedback are used frequently to help students and
- teachers gauge how well a student is “getting it.”
- Multiple approaches to assessment, including objective and subjective quizzes and exams, creative writing assignments, research papers, and group projects, are included in the course.

For courses developed or enhanced by Graduation Alliance, course design is informed by the ADDIE model for instructional design and development. It includes the assessment of learner needs; a comprehensive design plan produced by the development team, including a subject matter expert, instructional designer, and multimedia developers; development of high-quality, relevant instructional content, including multimedia and simulations; implementation of the course in a pilot environment; and an ongoing evaluation and revision process.

Non-Sectarian Content Policy

Graduation Alliance's private school program, as well as its programs offered to students through public school districts, is non-sectarian in nature. While it is necessary for some lessons to address the religious beliefs of various peoples in the context of geography and history, for example, these lessons only explore religion to the extent that it is reasonable with regard to the standards and objectives of the course. These lessons do not address any particular religion with undue attention and are free of biased language. Instructional materials remain non-sectarian in content; verbal or written contact between any representative of Graduation Alliance and any student(s) must be clearly non-sectarian in nature.

Alignment to State Standards

Graduation Alliance’s core academic courses are aligned to the state of Florida standards. Florida Common Core Graduation Alliance to state course code mappings will be supplied to «SD_Name» upon request.

Record Keeping

Records to be Maintained

Graduation Alliance will maintain and store the following records:

- Student Enrollment Forms
- Student Educational Profiles
- Signed copies of the Student Honor Code
- Unofficial student transcripts
- Education Plans for each student, including documentation of required weekly direct personal contact.
- All student progress reviews, evaluations, and assessment results required.
- Student enrollment detail substantiating FTE enrollment reporting to the State.

Location, Duration, and Format

Records will be stored in accordance with Northwest Accreditation Commission, a division of Cognia, standards and industry best practices; at minimum, records will be stored by Graduation Alliance for 12 months after the termination of the contract with the District.

Student/Parent Satisfaction Surveys

As part of our continual program improvement process, Graduation Alliance will develop, distribute, and collect satisfaction surveys from students/parents about their experience with various aspects of the learning experience, which may include:

- Entry Survey
- Enrollment process
- Course registration process
- Orientation process
- Materials acquisition process
- Exit Survey
- Academic advising experience (diploma-seeking students)
- Student/parent portal
- Technology ease of use
- Student support services
- End of Course Surveys
- Course content – relevance, rigor
- Instruction

Data collected in surveys will be considered the property of Graduation Alliance and will be made available to the District upon request.

Appendix A: Special Education Accommodations

Graduation Alliance works closely with partner districts to ensure appropriate placement for special education students, per our policy and operations manual. The following common IEP/504 requirements may be accommodated in Graduation Alliance's online programs.

Assignments

- Alternative method for completing assignments
- Assignment calendar
- Duplicate set of textbooks
- Student Sheets/Guides (available in core courses)
- Extended time

Behavior Support

- Instruction in social skills
- Modified classroom
- Modified schedule
- Use of positive feedback
- Special customized reinforcements

Communication/Listening

- Alternative method for completing oral assignments
- ADA Section 504 compliant online materials for use with assistive technologies
- Written backup
- Visual cues
- Written transcripts of audio/visual materials

Environment

- Increase/decrease physical movement
- Modified schedule
- Strategies for reducing auditory and/or visual stimuli

Equipment and Assistive Devices

- Calculators
- Computer
- Voice recorders

Health/Physical

- Body positioning
- Mobility accommodations
- Modified schedules

Math

- Use of calculators
- Extended time on assignments

Reading

- Alternative to oral reading
- Audio supplements for long reading assignments
- 4th or 5th grade-level options for novel assignments
- Extended time
- Study guide/organizers
- Highlight main ideas

Support Services

- Paraeducator (online academic coaches)
- Tutors (available 24x7 online)
- Student Advocates to help connect students to counseling, health care, interpreter resources as needed.

Testing/Assessment

- Adapted test formats
- Allow student to respond orally/on tape
- Allow open book test or use of notes on tests
- Allow test to be read orally or taped for student
- Provide study sheet/preview test
- Shortened test or extended time

Writing

- Alternative method of completing assignments
- Assistive devices (computers, voice-to-text software, audio recorders)
- Shortened task or material

Appendix B - Required Credits and Courses

Graduation requirements can be found at the following link: Crosswalk.