



## **Empowering Parents, Teachers, and Students by Increasing Parent Choices in the Virtual School Market**

Currently, if Florida parents want to use scholarship dollars, they are relegated to a small few online providers for virtual instruction for their child. Most of these online providers are associated with the Florida Virtual School.

We believe that parents should have a wide range of options for their children when it comes to online education because every child is different. We believe this is the original intent of the universal school choice bill HB 1 (2023).

In addition, by allowing more choice in the virtual school market, opportunities for teachers in Florida will increase, students' success will flourish, and indirectly, the state will save taxpayer dollars by decreasing the monopoly of publicly funded virtual schools.

The main issue we have identified with the current language in the Florida Statute 1002.45 is the requirement for administrative staff to be state residents and for instructional staff to be Florida state-certified teachers. Many online virtual providers have nationwide coverage, and not all of their teachers live in Florida. This current language is hindering the growth of provider options in Florida. We believe striking the language will allow for the empowerment of parents, teachers, and students.

Proposed language change

1002.45- Virtual Instruction programs.—

(2) PROVIDER QUALIFICATIONS.—

- (a) The department shall annually publish online a list of providers approved to offer virtual instruction programs. To be approved by the department, a provider must document that it:
1. Is nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and operations;
  2. Complies with the antidiscrimination provisions of s. [1000.05](#);
  3. Locates an administrative office or offices in this state, ~~requires its administrative staff to be state residents, requires all instructional staff to be Florida-certified teachers under chapter 1012~~ and conducts background screenings for all employees or contracted personnel, as required by s. [1012.32](#), using state and national criminal history records;