



DATE: February 7, 2023

TO: Matthew Sutherlin, Ph.D.

FROM: John L Colbert, Ed.D., Superintendent - Fayetteville Public Schools
Kim Cook, Principal - Fayetteville Virtual Academy

RE: Request an appeal of the DESE classification Accredited - Cited Status

Fayetteville Public Schools - Fayetteville Virtual Academy is respectfully requesting an appeal of the DESE classification **Accredited - Cited** status.

During the 2021-2022 school year, FVA tested 93.75% of the students enrolled.
Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, FVA consistently met the 95% tested requirement.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, enrollment at Fayetteville Virtual Academy increased due to the harmful effects of the virus. Many parents chose to enroll their child/children in our virtual school due to the at-risk medical conditions of their student and/or family members within their homes.

FVA is a small school, so just a few students can have a huge impact on our percentage of students tested. If only **three** more of our students had tested, we would have achieved 95% for all students. Some of our subgroups are so small that only one student not testing lowered our rate below 95%. For example, we only have 13 English Language Learners and one of them did not test, which brought our average for that subgroup to 92.31%

Throughout the testing window, FVA staff continuously reached out to parents of students who had not tested, made every attempt to test students, and scheduled testing sessions that included:

- 1:1 testing
- Testing with a vaccinated and masked staff member
- Testing at the parent's convenience

Despite our best efforts to accommodate parent concerns, there were four students whose parents still chose not to present their student for testing at Fayetteville Virtual Academy.

In addition, two students did not test due to extenuating circumstances that caused them to withdraw during the testing window.

- One student became an unaccompanied minor who was homeless and unaccounted for a period of time, but was thankfully located. A relative from Texas was able to gain temporary guardianship of the student and relocated the student to Texas. The student was withdrawn from FVA during the testing window.
- A student moved to Mexico as a result of an unexpected family medical emergency and withdrew from FVA during the testing window.

The following additional procedures have been implemented to ensure FVA meets the 95% testing requirement in the future:

- All Aspire tests will start the first week of the testing window and makeup testing will be scheduled immediately for any student who does not finish all tests.
- Upon application to the school, parents must verify in writing that they have been informed that all students must take state assessments.
- Before enrollment, parents must agree to present their student for all state assessments as part of a Parent Agreement.
- Final exam exemptions will not be approved for students who do not participate in state assessments.
- The testing dates are sent to parents months in advance with several reminders up until the test.
- Accommodations for parents will be made including allowing students to make up tests as needed throughout the window.