

From: Governor's Press Office [Governor'sPressOffice@eog.myflorida.com]
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Gov. Scott Directs Florida Department of Education to Take Additional Action to Help Puerto Rican Students and Educators

TAMPA, Fla. – Today, Governor Rick Scott directed the Florida Department of Education (DOE) to waive rules and regulations to ensure Puerto Rican students impacted by Hurricane Maria are able to continue their education in Florida. The Governor has also directed DOE to waive the educator certificate application fee and other requirements to help Puerto Rican educators displaced by the storm more easily continue their teaching careers in Florida.

Governor Scott said, "As Puerto Rican families work to rebuild their lives following the unbelievable devastation caused by Hurricane Maria, we are doing everything we can to help them throughout this process. I have directed the Department of Education to take additional action today to ensure students from Puerto Rico can more easily continue their education here in Florida and that teachers from Puerto Rico have every opportunity to continue to succeed in their careers. We will continue to work together to make sure Puerto Rican families have all the support they need."

Education Commissioner Pam Stewart said, "As a result of the devastating effects of Hurricane Maria, families from Puerto Rico and elsewhere have relocated to Florida. Entire communities were destroyed and we do not know how long it will take to restore schools and other essential infrastructure. Therefore, it is critical that these students and teachers have the opportunity to participate in our state's outstanding public education system. We are pleased to remove barriers to enrollment and help these students and teachers return to the classroom."

K-12 Public Schools

Due to the devastation left in the wake of this record-setting storm, some displaced families may not have immediate access to the records that are typically required to enroll in school. Therefore, at the direction of Governor Scott, DOE has temporarily waived statues and rules that will allow Florida public school districts to enroll Puerto Rican students whose education records are unavailable due to the storm. Upon receiving a request from a school superintendent, DOE will waive the application fee for an initial educator certificate and will allow the acceptance of an unofficial transcript of teaching degrees or copies of a valid teaching certificate issued by another state or U.S. territory.

The supplemental order relating to K-12 public schools is posted [HERE](#).

Florida College System

At the direction of Governor Scott, Commissioner Stewart also signed a supplemental order authorizing state colleges to waive existing rules and requirements to help Puerto Rican students more quickly enroll in college. At the request of Governor Scott, all 28 Florida College System institutions have agreed to offer in-state tuition to Puerto Rican students who were impacted by Hurricane Maria.

The supplemental order relating to Florida College System institutions is posted [HERE](#).

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