



Virtual Day Instruction Plan 2023-2024 School Year

Directions

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), building on the success of the opportunity provided in the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years, will continue to provide local education agencies (LEAs) with the ability to repurpose certain days as virtual school days in the **2023-2024 school year**. To ensure meaningful and equitable virtual instruction during these days, pursuant to the Superintendent's authority under Education Article §2-303, the following process and attestations have been established to seek approval to repurpose certain days as virtual school days.

The days that may be considered for this opportunity include inclement weather days (i.e., snow days), staff professional learning days, high school graduation days to enable teachers to assist with or attend the graduation, or other similar circumstances described in this application.

School systems will have the opportunity to use a total of **eight days** as a virtual school day for the described purposes. The days may be synchronous or asynchronous, however, **no more than three of the eight days** may be used as an asynchronous day.

Please respond to each question within the box provided and review and check the box for each assurance. The completed application must be submitted to the State Superintendent for review and approval.



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Devices and Access to Wi-Fi

Describe the school system's plan to ensure that all students (especially students who are homeless, students with disabilities, and English learner students) and teachers have the necessary devices at home for virtual days and have access to Wi-Fi.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, PGCPs prioritized access to devices and Wi-Fi for virtual learning. As students returned to school buildings full-time for in-person learning, PGCPs continued to prioritize these areas to ensure there would be no digital divide impacting students' opportunity to learn and study after school hours, or during scheduled virtual learning days. PGCPs is now a 1-to-1 school district that ensures access to the necessary computer hardware for all students and staff. Additionally, PGCPs issues hotspots for use where needed.

Devices - *As a 1-to-1 district, every student in PGCPs has access to a digital mobile device (Chromebook or iPad) for use at school and at home for learning. This allows us to provide synchronous virtual learning in real time as well as asynchronous learning opportunities.*

Internet Connectivity - *The overwhelming majority of PGCPs students have access to the internet at home. Where the digital divide persists, PGCPs has utilized ESSER funding to provide students in need a hotspot to use outside of the school day and to support virtual learning. The PGCPs Homeless Education Office itself is also issued a set of hotspots for quick deployment should a family experience homelessness and be without internet access. Additionally, in SY22-23, PGCPs has been working directly with families and internet providers to leverage funding from the Federal Communications Commission Affordable Connectivity Program to enable internet service for households in need.*

General System and School Preparedness



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Schools continue to monitor students' need for devices and internet access, and work with the PGCPs Information Technology division to ensure students — and staff — have the necessary tools for digital learning when devices become damaged or if families need support with home access to the internet. Damaged student mobile devices are exchanged at the school level for operable ones, and damaged devices are removed weekly for repair. Schools are provided surplus devices so students have access to a device if their assigned device is damaged

Accommodations

Describe the plan to provide the student with a free appropriate public education and implement the learning continuity plan in the student's IEP (including specially designed instruction, related services, supplementary aides and services, and accommodations).

Specially designed instruction for students with an IEP will be provided in multiple formats through Google Meets, Zoom, and telehealth sessions, to include accommodations, modifications, supplementary aids, and related services in accordance with a student's IEP. Each student's IEP reflects the accommodations, supplementary aides, and services that must be met if a student transitions to virtual learning through the emergency planning section of the IEP.

PGCPS is planning for synchronous virtual learning on inclement weather days, as well as asynchronous learning on teacher professional half days. These models of virtual learning have been successfully implemented in PGCPS since March 2020. Continuity of learning will remain the priority and daily instruction will continue based on the previous day's lesson. On synchronous virtual learning days, no adjustments to the regular school schedule are necessary because students will simply progress through their daily class schedule, only virtually instead of in-person. Instruction will be provided via Zoom and Google Meet platforms. While utilizing these video platforms, staff members will use Google Classroom and Canvas Learning Management System to house actual student assignments.

Additionally, PGCPS successfully implemented asynchronous virtual learning, both in the PGCPS Online Campus and in the school system at large last school year for half days



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of school on the last day of the first, second, and third quarters, which are teacher professional half days. In preparation for any asynchronous learning that occurs, our staff will have communicated with students and families the instructional tasks that students will work on during that time. This preparation is inclusive of all students, including students with disabilities. For these programs, additional time, attention and resources will be provided in advance for a successful virtual learning experience.

Opportunity for Engagement

The completed Department required Virtual Day Instruction Plan and Attestation Template must be publicly presented and discussed at a local school board meeting. An opportunity for parents to publicly comment or submit comments must be included as part of the school board meeting. The completed Virtual Day Instruction Plan and Attestation Template submitted by the LEA must have been voted on and approved by the local board. This is a required element of the application. There will be no Department review or consideration for approval until this step is completed.

Date of Local Board of Education Meeting(s):

- *August 24, 2023*
- *September 21, 2023*

Communication Process

Describe the communication process to students, teachers, parents/guardians, etc. that the day will be virtual (synchronous or asynchronous) and the plan for instruction.

The PGCPS official school calendar will reflect the virtual day instructional plan for SY2023-2024. The professional half days for teachers at the end of the first, second, and third quarter will each be marked as asynchronous virtual learning half days for students on the PGCPS calendar, which is publicized and available on the PGCPS website. Additionally, PGCPS will utilize all of its communication platforms to apprise students, parents, and staff of the virtual instruction plan for SY2023-2024. All stakeholders will be



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notified once the plan is finalized, and repeated communication reminders and updates will be issued through our various platforms, including but not limited to email, press release, phone calls, social media, school newsletters, and school websites.

For inclement weather synchronous virtual learning days, PGCPs will notify all stakeholders of the inclement weather learning plan for SY 2023-2024 through all available communication platforms. The school calendar itself will reflect that the first three days of inclement weather school closures will be made up at the end of the school year through in-person school days that are already programmed in the PGCPs school calendar. Additional inclement weather days that may occur during the school year will then become virtual learning days. This plan will be communicated during the first quarter of the school year through all channels available.

As the school year progresses and we move into winter, PGCPs will again share the inclement weather learning plan for the district. If three inclement weather days were to occur and need to be made up in person at the end of the school year, then PGCPs would remind all stakeholders that subsequent inclement weather days will become virtual learning days. On these actual subsequent days of inclement weather, students and staff will be notified through the normal PGCPs communication process for inclement weather plans that the inclement weather day is a virtual learning day. This includes declaring which type of inclement weather day (e.g. "Code Blue, Yellow," etc), along with specific direction to students, staff, and parents that the day will be a virtual learning day. Additionally, students, staff, and parents will be notified by their school principals in advance of these potential inclement weather virtual learning days to be ready for virtual learning when the forecast calls for inclement weather, and to bring necessary instructional and learning equipment home with them.

When it becomes necessary to delay or cancel the opening of schools and/or Central and Area Offices, or close early due to inclement weather or another emergency, the following announcement will be made to area radio and television stations:

"Prince George's County Public Schools are closed. A Code _____ is in effect for all employees."



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Along with communicating a pre-existing code, and when appropriate, the school district will also indicate whether virtual instruction will take place on a given day.

Attendance Procedures for Asynchronous Days

Describe the specific procedures on how attendance will be taken on asynchronous days.

On asynchronous days, students will log into either the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) or Google Classroom and complete a digital check in attendance form certifying their attendance for the day, as well as complete assignments and respond to questions about their learning plan. The attendance form and completion of assignments will be used by the teacher of record to mark students as present or absent in the PGCPs student information system.

Additional Circumstances anticipated for the use of a Virtual Day

Describe any other days that are anticipated for the use of a virtual day in your LEA.

As discussed above, PGCPs proposes to utilize virtual learning in two situations:

- *Synchronous virtual learning on inclement weather days that are not already programmed in the PGCPs SY 2023-2024 school calendar. There are a total of three in-person inclement weather make-up days built into the existing PGCPs school calendar. If there are more than three inclement weather days during the SY 2023-2024 school year, then these additional inclement weather days will become synchronous virtual learning days, up to the limit of virtual instruction days available as established by the Maryland State Department of Education.*
- *Asynchronous virtual instruction for half days of school on the last day of the first, second, and third quarters of the SY 2023-2024 school year. These dates are designated as professional half days for teacher grading and planning in the negotiated agreement between PGCPs and the Prince George's County Educators*



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Association, and are denoted as such on the PGcps school calendar.

Additional Factors

Describe any other factors particular to the plan for virtual days in your LEA.

Thank you for the opportunity to continue providing virtual instruction during the 2023- 2024 school year. We greatly appreciate the Maryland State Department of Education's innovative and forward thinking on this issue. As a school system, PGcps continues to be well prepared for virtual learning and has significant experience at this point in implementing system-wide virtual instruction. Last school year, converting to virtual schooling was a successful process that facilitated student learning. As a community, Prince George's County welcomes the opportunity to continue learning virtually when in-person instruction is not possible due to inclement weather and on other interrupted days of instruction. As a school system, PGcps has the experience, infrastructure, and readiness to implement virtual learning at scale. Thank you to MSDE for continuing to provide this exciting opportunity

Attestations (Please check each box)

- There will be a minimum of four hours of synchronous instruction for all students on each synchronous virtual day.
- There will be no more than a total of eight virtual days.
- There will be no more than three asynchronous virtual days out of the total of eight possible virtual days.
- Attendance will be taken for all students and teachers during the virtual day.



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- For asynchronous days, a transparent process will be used to take attendance.
- Virtual days will not negatively impact a student's grade. There will be meaningful opportunities for students to make up work outside of virtual learning.
- The Virtual Day Instruction Plan was presented at a publicly accessible local board of education meeting. Parents were provided an opportunity to provide comment on the plan and the local board of education voted in favor of the plan presented in this application.
- The Virtual Day Instruction Plan will be posted on the LEA website. The link will be provided to MSDE upon approval of the Virtual Day Instruction Plan by MSDE.
- No employee's pay will be negatively impacted by the decision to have a virtual day. This includes custodians, cafeteria workers, etc.
- Use of a virtual day for any grade or grade band counts as one of the school system's virtual days.

Signature indicates agreement with the process and attestations for virtual days to be implemented as indicated in the 2023-2024 school year. Please submit the completed plan to State Superintendent Mohammed Choudhury by email at mohammed.choudhury@maryland.gov. The plan will be reviewed and response will be provided in a timely manner.

Local Education Agency Prince George's County Public Schools

Superintendent Mr. Millard House II



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Superintendent Signature _____

Date _____

Board President Ms. Judy Mickens-Murray

Board President Signature _____

Date _____