

Introduction

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has opened a pathway for local school systems to repurpose inclement weather days as asynchronous school days for the 2022–2023 school year.

This document includes details on the Howard County Public School System's (HCPSS) proposed plan to transition to asynchronous learning for up to three asynchronous school days when or if the weather makes it unsafe to provide bus service or have students and staff report to school buildings during the 2022-2023 school year. It also includes attestations that must be submitted to the State Superintendent for review and approval before implementation.

The framework below supports our approach for asynchronous instruction days during inclement weather.

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MSDE GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR REPURPOSING

The Maryland State Department of Education has provided the following parameters for use when establishing an asynchronous instruction plan. School systems must:

- use no more than a total of eight virtual days, three of which may be asynchronous
- include a minimum of four hours of synchronous instruction for all students on each synchronous virtual day
- record attendance for all students and teachers during the virtual day
- include a transparent process to take attendance for asynchronous days
- ensure virtual days do not negatively impact student grades and provide meaningful opportunities for students to make up work outside of virtual learning
- present the asynchronous instruction plan at a publicly accessible local board of education meeting and provide an opportunity for public comment on the plan
- post the asynchronous instruction plan on the school system website
- obtain Board of Education approval of the asynchronous instruction plan before submission to MSDE for approval
- ensure no employee's pay is negatively impacted by the decision to have a virtual day

Note: Meal provision excluded from MSDE parameters

HCPSS GIVENS AND CONSIDERATIONS

The HCPSS Inclement Weather Asynchronous Instruction Plan has been crafted under the following structural and procedural factors:

- PreK students and secondary students will have 1:1 device access for virtual days
- K-5 students will not have access to devices for virtual days
- With no inclement weather days, the last day of school is scheduled for Tuesday, June 13, 2023
- With the five inclement weather days built into the 2022-2023 school system calendar, the last day of school is scheduled as Wednesday, June 21, 2023 (Schools are closed June 19 for Juneteenth)
- With the HCPSS Inclement Weather Asynchronous Instruction Plan in place (3 days), the last day of school including five inclement weather days is scheduled for Thursday, June 15, 2023
- The HCPSS Inclement Weather Asynchronous Instruction Plan will be activated at the Superintendent's discretion
- HCPSS Policy 8020 Grading and Reporting: Middle and High School and HCPSS Policy 8010 Grading and Reporting: Pre-Kindergarten Through Grade Five provide parameters for late/makeup work which will be applicable to asynchronous instruction day tasks

PREPARATION AND COMMUNICATION

Status Codes

On an inclement weather day, an asynchronous instruction day decision occurs at the discretion of the Superintendent. One of two additional codes will be instituted to reflect the decision to transition to an asynchronous instruction day: Code Purple Asynchronous Student Day - School buildings and Office buildings *open for staff only* or Code Pink Asynchronous Student Day - School buildings and Office buildings *closed*. Decisions regarding closings of schools due to inclement weather will be made no later than 5:30 a.m. As indicated on the HCPSS web page (<http://status.hcpss.org>), status codes reflect district-wide operations.

Code Purple: Asynchronous Student Day; Buildings Open

All Howard County public school and office buildings are open for staff only, with students operating on an asynchronous day.

Students complete asynchronous assignments. Elementary school students access asynchronous tasks distributed by teachers or via the HCPSS website. Students in grades 6-12 may access asynchronous assignments via Canvas two hours after the regular school start time.

All evening activities involving HCPSS students and staff are canceled. In addition, all community-sponsored programs in HCPSS buildings are canceled.

If there is a scheduled Board of Education meeting, a determination will be made regarding whether the meeting will be canceled or held virtually.

STAFF

- AFSCME: Employees report on time or as scheduled.
- AMT: Employees report 90 minutes later than regular reporting time.
- ESP 10- and 11-Month: Employees can work virtually or report to their school building. Staff who work virtually start work at their regular reporting time.

Staff who choose to report to the building, can report up to 90 minutes later than their regular reporting time.

- ESP 12-Month: Employees report 90 minutes later than the regular starting time.
- Food/Nutrition Services: Employees do not report to work and do not work virtually.
- HCASA-Admin: Employees report to work 90 minutes later than regular reporting time.
- HCASA-NCS School-Based: Employees begin workday 90 minutes later than regular reporting time. Staff can work virtually or report to their school building.
- HCASA-NCS Non-School Based: Employees report to work 90 minutes later than regular reporting time.
- HCEA 10- and 11-month: Employees can work virtually or report to their school building. Staff who work virtually start work at their regular reporting time. Staff who choose to report to the building, can report up to 90 minutes later than their regular reporting time.
- HCEA 12-month: Employees report to work 90 minutes later than regular reporting time.

All staff designated as emergency employees should report as directed by their supervisor.

Code Pink: Asynchronous Student Day; Buildings Closed

All Howard County public school and office buildings are closed, with students operating on an asynchronous day.

Students complete asynchronous assignments. Elementary school students access asynchronous tasks distributed by teachers or via the HCPSS website. Students in grades 6-12 may access asynchronous assignments via Canvas two hours after the regular school start time.

All evening activities involving HCPSS students and staff are canceled. In addition, all community-sponsored programs in HCPSS buildings are canceled.

If there is a scheduled Board of Education meeting, a determination will be made regarding whether the meeting will be canceled or held virtually.

STAFF

- AFSCME: Non-emergency employees do not report and do not work virtually.
- AMT: Employees begin virtual workday at regular reporting time.
- ESP 10- and 11-Month: Employees begin virtual workday at regular reporting time.
- ESP 12-Month: Employees begin virtual workday at regular reporting time.
- Food/Nutrition Services: Employees do not report to work and do not work virtually.
- HCASA-Admin: Employees begin virtual workday at regular reporting time.
- HCASA-NCS School-Based: Employees begin virtual workday at regular reporting time.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● HCASA-NCS Non-School Based: Employees begin virtual workday at regular reporting time. ● HCEA 10- and 11-month: Employees begin virtual workday at regular reporting time. ● HCEA 12-month: Employees begin virtual workday at regular reporting time. <p>All staff designated as emergency employees should report as directed by their supervisor. No other HCPSS employees may enter an HCPSS facility.</p>
<p>Staff, Student, and Family Communication</p>	<p><u>Preparation and Communication</u></p> <p>HCPSS will be deliberate, transparent, and proactive in preparing, communicating, and enacting an asynchronous inclement weather day. In alignment with MSDE Guiding Principles, HCPSS will communicate and post the establishment of the HCPSS Inclement Weather Asynchronous Instruction Plan on its website. It will provide a means for staff, students, and the community to give feedback on the plan. Feedback provided will be reported to the Board on October 4, 2022. HCPSS will also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ensure that schools and teachers communicate with families and support student readiness ● socialize the asynchronous instruction plan and processes throughout the year via principal and teacher messages, HCPSS system news, community/school events, and parent-teacher conferences ● ensure that grades 6-12 students take home Chromebooks, charging cords, and other identified instruction materials needed to complete assignments when there is pending inclement weather - PreK student devices are kept at home throughout the school year ● send “get ready” messages to students and families prompting them to notify their school if their child (secondary) does not have access to reliable internet or a device ● provide access to parent and student training resources to support asynchronous instruction days including logging in, accessing technical support, navigating Canvas, etc. ● communicate the decision to activate an inclement weather asynchronous instruction day through established communication channels—HCPSS website, emails and text messages, social media
<p>Central Office Preparation</p>	<p>The Department of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● develop asynchronous instruction day tasks for PreK-5 students that are aligned to the curriculum in 2- 4 week intervals beginning November and ending in March ● provide asynchronous learning tasks for all content areas including math, English language arts, content (science, social studies, and health) and related arts class ● provide hardcopies of asynchronous learning tasks per parent request to schools no later than one week prior to each month (November - March) ● develop training tools for families for logging in, accessing technology support, navigating Canvas, etc.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● provide professional learning opportunities for administrators, teachers, and school-based staff on all components of the asynchronous instructional plan
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STAFF SCHEDULE, INSTRUCTION, AND ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

<p>Secondary Teachers</p>	<p>The HCPSS vision for the asynchronous instruction day includes providing authentic learning experiences for our students. It is critical that instruction is current and aligned to what students are learning during the timeframe that the asynchronous instruction day occurs, making every attempt to maintain educational continuity. Secondary teachers of record will use the following schedule, instruction, and parameters during asynchronous instruction days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● utilize the Canvas learning management system to deliver HCPSS curriculum resources for all subjects and courses ● post assignments for each class in Canvas no later than two-hours after the normal student start time (i.e., 10:15 for a 8:15 start time) ● include assignments that are a continuation of work, review, or preparation for future lessons/instruction ● include no new learning or assessments in asynchronous instruction day assignments ● include an assignment to record student attendance ● provide meaningful opportunities for students to make up missed work outside of virtual learning in accordance with Policy 8020 parameters for late/makeup work ● grade assignments in accordance to parameters for the assignments ● attend virtually meetings previously scheduled for two hours after the student start time including IEP, PIP, team meetings, leadership meetings, staff meetings, collaborative planning meetings, Student Support Team meetings, School Improvement meetings, committee meetings, etc. ● complete the staff attendance form
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<p>Elementary PreK-5 Teachers</p>	<p>PreK-5 teachers of record will use the following schedule, instruction, and parameters during asynchronous instruction days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● survey families to determine students who will need hard copies of asynchronous instruction day tasks ● receive central office created asynchronous instruction day tasks packets for distribution per family requests ● distribute hard copies of asynchronous instruction day tasks per family request prior to the first day of each month , November - March
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● attend virtually meetings previously scheduled including IEP, PIP, team meetings, leadership meetings, staff meetings, collaborative planning meetings, Student Support Team meetings, School Improvement meetings, committee meetings, etc. ● complete the staff attendance form ● collect completed asynchronous instruction tasks from students upon return to school ● include completion of asynchronous instruction day tasks as an indicator of attendance
Infants and Toddlers Teachers	<p>Infants and Toddlers staff will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● hold previously scheduled virtual visits with families ● complete the staff attendance form
PreK-12 certified, school-based non-classroom teachers	<p>PreK-12 certified, school-based, non-classroom teachers will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Secondary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ attend virtually meetings previously scheduled two hours after the student start time including IEP, PIP, team meetings, leadership meetings, staff meetings, collaborative planning meetings, Student Support Team, School Improvement, committee, etc. ○ complete the staff attendance form ● Elementary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ attend virtually meetings previously scheduled including IEP, PIP, team meetings, leadership meetings, staff meetings, collaborative planning meetings, Student Support Team, School Improvement, committee, etc. ○ complete the staff attendance form
STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS, GRADING, AND ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS	
Secondary Students	<p>HCPSS curriculum resources for secondary students will be delivered within the Canvas learning management system. Resources will be available for all subjects and courses two hours after the start of the regular school day.</p> <p>Secondary Students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● log into each course via Canvas ● complete work assigned for each course ● indicate attendance by completing attendance assignment posted in each of the classes/courses ● receive grades in accordance with teacher parameters for the assignments
Elementary PreK-5 Students	<p>Elementary PreK-5 Students are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● access asynchronous instruction day task options via hard copy or hcpss.org website ● complete asynchronous instruction day tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ K-5 students - will complete one asynchronous instruction day task per curricular area: math, English language arts, content (science, social studies, or health) and assigned related arts class(es) scheduled for the asynchronous instruction day. Students with one related arts class scheduled on the asynchronous instruction day will complete a total of four tasks. Students with

	<p>two related arts classes scheduled on the asynchronous instruction day will complete a total of five tasks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ PreK students - will complete a total of three multidisciplinary asynchronous tasks ● indicate attendance by submitting completed tasks upon return to school
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

<p>Special Education Services</p>	<p>A Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) will continue to be provided to students with disabilities. Special education and related services will be delivered as identified in Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) to the greatest extent possible on asynchronous days. Services not received during the asynchronous instruction day will be provided after the asynchronous day. On the inclement weather day, students will receive accessible or alternate asynchronous tasks to the extent possible. HCPSS Public Schools will continue to comply with all regulations established in IDEA, COMAR, and MSDE technical assistance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Career and Community Exploration/Work Study/Project Search/ Community Connections Department of Special Education Services (DSE)will provide guidance on asynchronous work ● Specialized Programs Multiple Intense Needs Classroom (MINC), Academic Life Skills(ALS) , Emotional Disabilities (ED), Early Learner(EL)/Primary Learner(PL)/Upper Learner(UL) - DSE will provide guidance on asynchronous work ● Special education teachers will maintain a tracking document for services that were not provided on the three asynchronous instruction days ● Special education teachers will collaborate with staff in the Department of Special Education, Countywide Services, and the Office of Early Intervention Services to coordinate delivery for services not provided on asynchronous instruction days Child Find/Early Intervention Assessment Team (EIAT) will hold meetings virtually if possible ● Individualized Family Support Plan(IFSP)/IEP meetings will occur virtually for Birth-5th grade students ● IEP meetings for secondary schools previously scheduled two hours after the start of the regular school day will be held virtually ● Assessments scheduled with Child Find/EIAT may continue using a virtual format
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NEXT STEPS

September 8	Report to the Board
September 9 - 22	Post the HCPSS Inclement Weather Asynchronous Instruction Plan and survey for review and public input
October 4	Request Board Approval
October 7	Submit HCPSS Inclement Weather Asynchronous Instruction Plan to MSDE

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. 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 comments 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 2022-2023 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 a response will be provided in a timely manner.

Local Education Agency: Howard County Public School System

Superintendent: Michael J. Martirano, Ed.D.

Superintendent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Board President: Vicky Cutroneo

Board President Signature: _____

Date: _____