



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEWS RELEASE

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LEARNING IN 13 KENTUCKY DISTRICTS WON'T STOP DUE TO WINTER WEATHER

(FRANKFORT, KY) -- When the snow flies this winter, students in 13 Kentucky school districts will continue learning even when they aren't at school.

The Kentucky Department of Education has approved waivers that allow the districts' use of virtual or other non-traditional means of instruction when school is cancelled because of weather or another emergency. In most cases, students will participate in the snow day lessons online.

"Last winter's harsh weather created a significant hardship for both teachers and students alike. Many of our districts were forced to close for several days or weeks at a time, which not only disrupted instruction but also extended the school year for many," said Education Commissioner Terry Holliday. "While we hope that this winter will not bring the same challenges, now students in the approved districts will be able to carry on with learning – even when inclement weather keeps them out of the classroom."

Under the provisions of the waiver, a district may count up to 10 non-traditional instruction days as regular attendance days in its school calendar and not have to make them up.

The 13 districts that received non-traditional instruction waivers for the 2014-15 school year had to submit applications that described their plans for learning while school was not in session. The applications were scored on a rubric that evaluated teaching methods, equal access to the lessons for students without Internet access, staff deployment, community engagement and assessment of student learning.

The districts that qualified for the non-traditional instruction waivers are:

- Boyle County
- Corbin Independent Schools
- Grant County
- Jessamine County
- Johnson County
- Lawrence County
- Leslie County
- Owsley County
- Pike County
- Taylor County
- Todd County
- Washington County
- Wolfe County

(more)

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In the spring, districts will submit documentation of student and faculty participation and measurements of student learning for the missed days. The Department of Education then will determine the number of regular attendance days granted to the district under the provisions of the waiver.

All 173 school districts were eligible to apply for the non-traditional instruction waivers this year due to a change in state law; previously only districts that missed more than 20 school days were eligible. House Bill 211, which revised [KRS 158.070\(9\)](#), allowed the education commissioner to grant up to 10 student attendance days to districts that had an alternative instruction plan approved. The law also required the district to prove how teaching and learning would not be negatively impacted.

For more information on the program go to <http://education.ky.gov/school/innov/Pages/Non-Traditional-Instruction.aspx>.

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