

“Non-Traditional Instruction”
Application per KRS 158.070

District: Grant County Schools
No Learning Like SNOW Learning plan

Date: August 13, 2014

1. Please describe your overall approach to combating lost instruction on adverse weather or other emergency days? How have you involved all stakeholders in planning for this approach?

Grant County Schools has averaged 14 snow days the last 5 years, with missing 22 days in the 2013-2014 school year. For many years, our schools have sent work home with students in anticipation of missing, however, a formal plan has not been in place. Last year, we asked all schools to develop “Snow Packets” for students as the year unfolded and we realized it was going to be an extremely long winter. Parents were very receptive and appreciative of this concept. With feedback from parents, we decided to talk to other stakeholders. Our principals pitched the idea to their SBDM councils and a group of teachers, representing all schools and grade levels were polled on the No Learning Like SNOW Learning plan (NLLSL). Each group was able to express their ideas and thoughts, but ALL groups thought it was a tremendous advantage for our students to continue their learning.

Our overall plan is to maximize studies during the school year for students even on days school is not in session. This plan will ensure learning will continue without a break in academic achievement. Working directly with teachers, parents, and students to communicate the specifics of the plan will be instrumental in implementation. The district is committed to making sure all teachers have the necessary tools to make the plan successful. A clearly communicated plan as well as providing professional development to staff on our choice of technology for this venture, Homework Exchange, will be a major key to success. Teachers will be responsible for developing rigorous, project based lessons that are aligned directly with Kentucky’s Common Core Standards. Along with planning lessons, teachers will be accessible to students on snow days for guidance and support and will also be responsible for providing feedback to students once lessons are completed. Students with access to technology will work to complete lessons and turn them in to their assigned teacher. Those without access to technology will also be able to complete assignments and our schools are committed to making sure all students will have relevant, rigorous assignments to complete. We ask parents for support and know that with a good communication plan, all parents will appreciate the increased learning opportunity. With all stakeholders working together on this plan, we feel our students will benefit tremendously.

2. What evidence of capacity and previous experiences with non-traditional environments does the district have?

Grant County Schools has had previous experience with non-traditional instructional environments in several different capacities. From a district standpoint, our leadership is committed to moving our focus into the 21st century through utilization of non-traditional environments. For the past three years we have embraced the district BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) policy. Teachers and students have been encouraged to use technology to increase learning in and out of the school setting. Our technology staff works directly with each school to provide training on the newest trends in technology and hold their own Professional Learning Community monthly to provide professional development to take back to their schools.

With the increase in use of technology district wide, our bandwidth capabilities has also increased. To support this infrastructure, our technology department works directly with the Kentucky Department of Education to make sure we can support the increase. Along with two district technology staff, each school has a School Technology Coordinator as well as our Media Specialists being resources for teachers in the area of technology. All buildings in the district have wireless and are equipped to handle any type of device. In fact, we are above the KETS standards in every building which allows teachers more opportunity for non-traditional instruction.

This past summer our elementary schools provided every child with a differentiated learning path through Compass Learning with the expectation that they would complete some or all of their path throughout the summer months. Each elementary school “competed” against the other and we are rewarding the school with the most participation. We will also monitor progress on each individual child at the school level once school has started. From the feedback we have received on this initiative so far from parents has been tremendously positive. Our expectation is to see a reduction in the “summer slide” as evidenced through MAP (Measures of Academic Performance), which will be taken in October.

In addition, we have multiple teachers who have embraced learning in a non-traditional method. Through the use of “flipped classrooms” we have teachers who ask students to watch lectures in the evening for homework and then they complete the practice work in class under the careful watch of a qualified teacher. We have teachers that already use technology to post assignments and interact with students. Technology formats are becoming increasingly more popular and teachers in our district are already using Edmodo, Celly, WIKI, Wiggio, Twitter, and teacher web pages among others to engage students outside of the regular school day.

Students in our alternative school, in credit recovery classes and students who are homebound are successful in the use of Odysseyware, an online program that our district purchases for students in these settings. For many students, this non-traditional approach to learning has been the key to their successful finish of high school.

- 3. What learning management system will the district use to manage the non-traditional program? What features does this system possess that can track student participation and measures of learning? Include in your description how the district is following the new Digital Guidelines from KDE. What other digital platforms, applications or tools will the district use to ensure learning is taking place on non-traditional student attendance days?**

We are fortunate in Grant County to have multiple technology systems which allow our students to continue their learning outside of the regular school day. Our entire district has access to Compass Learning, which is a program that differentiates instruction for every child, building a specific pathway of learning instruction unique to each of our students. This program also gives the teacher the capability to assign a lesson for their entire class. The management system is built into the program and teachers have the capability of monitoring student progress.

Our middle and high school students have access to Odysseyware, which is a program we use in our alternative school, for credit recovery students and those on homebound. Students can access their work at a remote location if they choose. The management system is built into this program and teachers can monitor the progress of students as they complete assignments.

For the NLLSL plan, our district will use Homework Exchange, which is similar to what most know as Blackboard. Through the interface of Homework Exchange teachers will be able to provide a variety of instructional tools to students including articles, videos, links to webcasts, teacher recordings, power points, and other resources students may need for learning. Students complete the lesson and can send it back to the teacher from this program. Every student in grades 3-12 have access to an email account that will be used to communicate directly to the teacher in regard to lessons posted on Homework Exchange. This gives teachers the ability to monitor learning and provide more feedback and support to the lessons students are completing.

This plan has been developed with the Digital Learning Guiding Principles in mind. Particularly the following 5 guiding principles:

1. A highly qualified teacher in the school reviews and endorses digital content. Currently 100% of our teachers are highly qualified and therefore able to plan and prepare for the NLLSL plan for Grant County.
2. A highly qualified teacher or content mentor stewards student learning performance and demonstrated mastery. As previously stated, all teachers are highly qualified and will be able to successfully monitor student performance, provide effective feedback, and ensure student mastery of content.
3. Learners have access to highly qualified teachers, content coaches, or professionally recognized masters in the course field, as mentors in their digital learning experience. Many of our teachers already communicate with students through different modes of technology. A key component to our NLLSL plan will involve students using their email accounts to communicate with teachers. Since we know all students have access to this email account, the district is able to assure students have a technological mode of communication with their teachers.

4. Student learning experiences are personalized based on the following: students' diagnostic data, learning style, and learning needs which allow for student choice, voice, and pace. Lessons planned for NLLSL will be planned keeping this component in mind. All lessons will incorporate some type of project based learning experience that will incorporate student choice, voice, and pace. Research based professional development with our staff has helped to plan lessons with data and differentiation of learning styles in mind. This is no different than the expectation of lessons planned on a daily basis.
5. Effective teaching practices prescribed by Professional Growth and Effectiveness System apply equally to digital learning experiences. Digital learning falls easily into the PGES teacher evaluation system. Under PGES students are the center of all learning. A classroom where students are taking the initiative to ask higher level questions, are monitoring their own achievement, and creatively and innovatively pursuing their own learning is a classroom that will be exemplary. The NLLSL plan will be built upon this construct as students will have the capability to incorporate all these components.

4. **Please describe in detail the process the district will use on non-traditional student attendance days. Please include how you will account for all students' access to on-line resources and how you will provide equitable instructional materials for those students that do not have access to the internet? Include how community partners will be engaged and any opportunities that will exist at community locations or if the district will open schools to provide access.**

Our plan is to be well prepared before the first bad weather day hits our district!

1. As soon as we receive approval from KDE, our plan is to meet with every teacher in the district to review the needs of the No Learning Like SNOW Learning plan. We will also relay this plan to students and parents through in school communication as well as on a district scale employing our district web site, the one call system, our district Facebook page, and our community newspaper.
2. Every student in our district will be "assigned" to a teacher for accountability purposes. At the elementary level this will be the student's homeroom teacher. At the middle school level, it will be the child's first hour teacher and at the high school it will be the student's intervention teacher. These teachers will be responsible for finding out which students can use a technology based approach and who will need a paper packet of materials to take home. They will also monitor the progress of work completed on NLLSL days for their assigned students.
3. Teachers across the district will determine material to be used on NLLSL days. The district has determined the focus of instruction will be Literacy and Numeracy. Within literacy and numeracy we plan to embed other content areas such as science, social studies, and the arts. These plans will be developed through PLC meetings and/or on a Contract Day.
 - a. At the elementary level, each grade span will work together to develop a "No Learning Like SNOW Learning" lesson in Kentucky Common Core standards of

reading and math for 5 different days of instruction. Therefore, students will have 2 lessons to complete each snow day. Teachers will create lessons that are rigorous, relevant, and cross curricular. The expectation will be for teachers to develop a formative assessment that will be project or task based to show understanding of the material. Each lesson will have the assessment and rubric included within the material as well as clearly defined instructions so the student knows exactly what is expected. Students who do not have access to technology will be provided lessons in paper format.

- b. At the middle school level, teachers in the core areas of English and math will work together to create lessons for students. Based on student achievement data, we will develop lessons based on either the Kentucky Common Core or from the College and Career Readiness Standards. Each group will develop 2 lessons for 5 different days of instruction. The expectation is that lessons are rigorous, relevant, and cross curricular. Each lesson will include a formative assessment that will be project or task based to show understanding of the material. Each lesson will have the assessment and rubric included within the material as well as clearly defined instructions so the student knows exactly what is expected. Students who do not have access to technology will be provided lessons in paper format.
 - c. At the high school level students will be connected to teachers through their intervention period, which is already assigned in the master schedule. Intervention teachers will be responsible for creating lessons for their students based on the College and Career Readiness Standards in reading and math. All English/Language and math teachers at the high school will assist and monitor lessons to ensure they are rigorous and relevant for meeting the needs of the students in each intervention class. Each lesson will include a formative assessment that could be project or task based to show understanding of the material. Each lesson will have the assessment and rubric included within the material as well as clearly defined instructions so the student knows exactly what is expected. These lessons will also be posted on our district web site in PDF format.
 - d. Teachers will also work to develop on-line assignments. These assignments will be through our web based technologies such as Compass, Odysseyware, and/or Homework Exchange.
4. Once the material has been developed, it will be the responsibility of each teacher to communicate to the students they are accountable to for NLLSL days in regard to their choices of learning on these days. At this time, they will also work with students on how the on-line technologies can be used and the interaction available for support from staff on snow days.
 5. Our local public library has always worked with our schools to provide technology access for those that may not have the capability in their home.
 6. Students and staff will follow the procedures below after a NLLSL day:
 - a. Students will have 2 days after the NLLSL day to complete the assigned lessons and submit to the teacher that is accountable to them.
 - b. Teachers will use the scoring guides and rubrics to score student work.
 - c. Feedback will be given to students on the completed work.

- d. Teachers and administration will meet to discuss student work in relation to quality, completion rate, successful understanding of content, and other items that need to be reviewed in order to make revisions or adjustments for the next NLLSL day.
- e. District administration will review student work and results to monitor the program, make changes if necessary and continuously evaluate results.

5. Please explain the professional learning plan you will be implementing to ensure certified staff have the knowledge and capacity they need to provide quality blended instruction to students. Also describe how you will incorporate CIITS and any additional technology platforms teachers may use.

Our staff is already trained in the use of Compass Learning and Odysseyware. With Homework Exchange, each school has agreed to train every faculty member at a staff meeting before November. Our technology department has developed the training which will take about 45 minutes. The agenda for training is as follows:

Homework Interchange Training

AGENDA

- * Introduction -- Students and staff can easily communicate or collaborate within class or department groups making sending assignments or sharing documents a breeze.
- I. Present and explain how digital information can be easily shared between teachers and students.
 - a. Show staff what the Digital Locker concept looks like and how it is tied to the classes and rosters in Infinite Campus.
 - b. Explain how permissions work when transferring files between the inbox and outbox. (What will teachers see/what will students see?)
 - c. Show teachers how to use a uniform naming convention to organize graded and non-graded assignments. (Best practices for student ease of use)

II. Lab Practice

- a. Actually show the teacher the product in action.
- b. Teacher hands on practice.

III. WebTrekker Teaser (Snow Plan Phase Two, future WebTrekker training)

Conclusion

Our staff already uses PD360 in CIITS for professional learning and to find resources for lessons. CIITS will also be utilized to develop lessons and create formative assessments to use

with the developed lessons. We will also continue to train our staff in the use of CIITS as well as other technology programs available for student/teacher instructional interaction.

- 6. Please describe the deployment of certified and classified school staff on non-traditional student attendance days. In what ways will certified and classified school staff complete their contractual obligations on these days (access the learning management system from home, serving as facilitator at school or community access points, serving as a phone facilitator). Please include a visual representation (e.g. chart, spreadsheet)**
 1. Our district does a One Call to all homes to announce school is canceled for students.
 2. A second call will go out to staff to let them know if and when they should report to work. This will be determined by our Director of Transportation.
 3. If the Director of Transportation makes the decision that teachers are able to report to work, each administrative team will ensure that a day of professional learning occurs with teachers. This could include Professional Learning Community meetings or assessment work. During this time, teachers will also be “plugged in” to the homework exchange system in order to answer any questions that students may have from home. They will also be available by phone.
 4. If the Director of Transportation makes the decision that the roads are too hazardous for our teachers to travel, then the contractual day will be added onto the end of the school year. However, teachers will make themselves available to students through email in order to answer any questions that students may have concerning the NLLSL lesson. Since there will be snow days teachers will be able to come into work, just at a later time in the day, working from home on other snow days to provide assistance to students should offset that time.
 5. Classified staff will not report to work on snow days and they will make up their contractual obligations either by staying at school for a longer period of time during the school day, on contract days or at the end of the year. Our thoughts are that classified staff are more beneficial when students are in the building. They will also be helpful in working with students who did not have access to technology and will be able to provide support to students to help complete NLLSL assignments. The district, working directly with the administrative teams from each building, will make specific plans based on need with each classified staff member.

7. Please describe the process the district will use to collect information on participation, what outcomes are expected and how those outcomes will be assessed on non-traditional student attendance days?

There will be a reasonable amount of work that will need to be collected before the first NLLSL day in Grant County. Each school will be responsible for knowing how many students are capable of completing the work through a technology platform and how many will need to take the work home before the first NLLSL day hits. Currently, our studies show that 74% of our students have access to some form of technology at home, so we would be working with 26% to develop a plan that will enable them to still receive benefit from a day of learning at home.

Student participation will be collected through the lesson design. Each lesson will include a pre and post assessment and the results from both will be reported for every student. Our district takes a standards based grading approach to assignments. The NLLSL assignment will be regarded the same as any other that students are expected to complete. Our teachers will work individually with each student as a follow up to the lesson and differentiate needs based on the student.

Teachers will be responsible for keeping data on their assigned NLLSL group. The expectation will be to:

- Monitor the number of students who are capable of using technology resources in the home.
- Monitor the number of students who need the NLLSL packets.
- Monitor and evaluate student performance, including providing feedback to students on the lessons completed.
- Provide data to the administration and for the administration to provide data to the district.

The outcomes to utilizing the NLLSL plan is expected to provide teachers valuable time in the classroom that they will not have to reteach concepts lost on snow days. The key will be to assure the planned and prepared lessons are focused on a skill that is being developed in the E/LA and math classroom. Therefore, the progression of learning will not be disrupted and students will have a deeper knowledge of each content area. Keeping students focused on content on snow days means they will return to class better prepared. We expect to see students, even at a very young age, begin taking leaning into their own hands which will ultimately show as they progress through school and into life. We will complete a survey of all students, parents and staff at the end of the school year in regard to their estimated success of our NLLSL plan.

All data, including pre and post test data and survey data, will be compiled and reviewed at the close of the 2014-2015 school year. At that time, the group will determine the success of the No Learning Like SNOW Learning plan and make revisions for the upcoming year.

