

**Non-Traditional Instruction Program
Application for Districts New to the Program
2015-2016**

KRS 158.070 Section 9:

Notwithstanding any other statute, each school term shall include no less than the equivalent of the student instructional year in subsection (1)(d) of this section, except that the commissioner of education may grant up to the equivalent of ten (10) student attendance days for school districts that have an alternative instruction plan approved by the commissioner of education for the use of alternative methods of instruction, including virtual learning, on days when the school district is closed for health or safety reasons, on nontraditional days, or on nontraditional time. The district's plan shall demonstrate how teaching and learning in the district will not be negatively impacted. Average daily attendance for purposes of Support Education Excellence in Kentucky program funding during the student attendance days granted shall be calculated in compliance with administrative regulations promulgated by the Kentucky Board of Education.

District

Mercer County

Date

April 29, 2015

Please complete the following questions as completely as possible. Expand the text boxes as necessary. Definitions can be found at the end of the question section.

1. a. Briefly describe the district's plan to combat lost instruction and learning loss on adverse weather or other emergency days.

Mercer County is a district focused on student success and plans to use the resources already available, along with introducing Google Classroom, to students to combat lost instructional time due to adverse weather or other emergency days. The district will implement a dual instructional plan where students can either work online for learning opportunities, or have a hard copy of work to do at home. The district plan will rely on existing resources to continue learning for students. The Titan Learning Day will focus on reinforcement, remediation or enrichment of skills. The assignments will be prepared by the teachers and aligned with the common core or other course curriculum standards.

- b. How were stakeholders (students, teachers, administrators, parents, community members, etc.) involved in the development of the district's Non-Traditional Instruction plan?

In preparing the plan for the Titan Learning Day, the district posted a summary of the plan on the website, Facebook and Twitter to get feedback from all stakeholders. 77% of the stakeholders in the community support the district's plan for a Titan Learning Day.

The district also sought out feedback from the Teacher and Student Voice group and SBDMs at each building.

The district will also survey the community asking where free Wifi services are, if any facilities have computers they would open to students on these days. The district surveyed internet access with the community stakeholders and 84% said they have access.

2. What previous experience does the district have with non-traditional learning, either with blended, digital, or other non-traditional methods? Briefly express the evidence of the district's capacity to execute a successful plan.

Mercer County Schools strives to help our student's access appropriate technology to aid in learning whenever possible. At all of our schools, students use technology for specific assessments and multiple learning platforms. In addition, we share web access with parents in order to allow for student access at home to enhance their skill practice and depth of understanding. At the secondary level, students use technology for presentations and specific classroom assignments, such as PowerPoint, Prezi, Google Classroom and Edmodo. In addition, we have worked with individual students over the past three years on accessing online coursework and virtual learning environments with teacher support to help our students succeed academically. We plan to have all teachers implement technology-enhanced instructional materials in the fall before utilizing a non-traditional day in order to provide students and families multiple opportunities to become more comfortable with the technology.

3. a. What method will the district use to deliver instruction on Non-Traditional Instruction days?

Mercer County will utilize Google Classroom as the learning management system for the Titan Learning Day. This system enables teachers to design assignments and quizzes and send the assignments out directly to the students. All teachers will be trained on this system in the fall and will use it at least once a month, throughout the fall, to practice and familiarize the students and parents with the system. This will be the time for parents and students to ask questions before implementing it on a Titan Learning Day. The district will also use hard copy packets to deliver instructional assignments. Students can choose which method of instructional delivery they prefer. The district website will have a parent guide of information on the Titan Learning day with phone numbers to call for assistance and helpful tips.

- b. If the method is digitally-based, is there a specific learning management system (Edmodo, Blackboard, etc.) that the district will use? What other digital applications and tools will be implemented?

Google Classroom will be the districts main learning management system.

Other systems are:

Lexia

Study Island

Dream box

Aleks

Reading Plus

Moby Max

Khan Academy

Learn Zillion

c. If the method is not digitally-based, please describe the instructional process.

Teachers will develop assignments that remediate, enrich or reinforce the skills taught in the fall semester and also in the current unit of study. All assignments will be aligned to the common core or other course standards. The teachers will work collaboratively with grade level content partners to design the lesson. The grade level lessons will be reviewed in PLC groups. The first 3 Titan Learning Days will be remediating knowledge and skills from learning in the fall semester. Days 4-10 will focus on current units of study.

4. a. How will the district account for all students' access to on-line resources and/or equitable instructional materials for those students who do not have access to the internet and/or devices and for students who may need to access information differently?

Mercer County school district will provide information to families on where there are hot spots throughout the district and the location of free Wifi. The district will be providing a hard copy packet of all assignments. These packet assignments will parallel the online assignments.

- b. What opportunities exist for community partners to be engaged in Non-Traditional Instruction days?

There will be opportunities for several local community partners to help provide internet access and computers to students at a location close to their home.

Mercer County Public Library

Mercer County Extension Office

McDonald's has Free Wifi

5. Please explain the professional learning plan the district will implement to ensure certified staff have the knowledge and capacity they need to provide quality blended, digital, or non-traditional instruction to students.

Teachers throughout the district will be trained by the district technology staff on the learning management system, Google Classroom, in August. Teachers will then be asked to provide an assignment each month, throughout the fall semester, using Google Classroom. This practice will give opportunities for the students and parents to ask questions, and for the teachers to ensure they know how to use the system before it is implemented on the Titan Learning Day.

6. a. Please describe the deployment of certified school staff on Non-Traditional Instruction days and describe how they will fulfill their contractual obligations on these days (access the learning management system from home, serve as facilitator at school or community access points, serve as a phone facilitator, etc.).

All teachers in Mercer County will maintain electronic access hours. This is the time, during the Titan Learning Day, where the teacher will be available (9:00am-12:00pm and 4:00-6:00pm) by email, phone or through Google Classroom to answer questions and provide support. Teachers will be evaluating student work as it is submitted on line and can give feedback if needed. Teachers using online instruction will post assignments each Titan Learning Day. Teachers will maintain a log of their activities on these days.

- b. Please describe the district's plan for classified school staff on Non-Traditional Instruction days. Describe how they will fulfill their contractual obligations on these days or indicate that they will make-up days at the end of the school year.

Classified staff will work with the immediate supervisor on their plan for make-up hours. Some examples may include but are not limited to: maintaining electronic access hours and help provide information on line for students, grading on-line assignments, creating materials for classroom, snow removal , summer feeding, and trainings, etc.

7. a. How will information on student participation be gathered on Non- Traditional Instruction days?

Mercer County teachers will collect online assignments daily on the days where students are using a Titan Learning Day. Students that select the hard copy packet option will turn in their completed work on the next day back in the building. Assignments will be graded with accuracy and that grade will count for attendance on that Titan Learning Day. Each teacher will have a log to account for their daily attendance on Titan Learning Days. These logs will be collected and turned into the school administrators.

- b. How will information on staff participation be gathered on Non- Traditional Instruction days?

Staff members will keep a time log sheet for each Titan Learning Day. Teachers will log in their time for access hours, planning instruction and grading the assignments.

All staff members will be expected to have a log sheet of documented time to account for the work on the Titan Learning Day or a time log sheet for make-up work (classified)

8. a. What learning outcomes will be met on Non-Traditional Instruction days? How will evidence of learning be gathered? (LMS reports, formative or summative assessments, projects, etc.)

Teachers will look at the work turned in to see if students completed or attempted to complete the assignments. An analysis of the quality of work turned in by students along with completion numbers will be used as evidence of learning.

- b. What method will the district use to ensure the learning on Non-Traditional Instruction days parallels the learning on regular instruction days?

The student work on the Titan Learning day will be the same as if they were in the classroom. Students will need to complete all assignments and participate in the online lessons or hard copy packets. Students that struggle will be given support by the teachers through electronic access hours just as those students would be provided that same support in the regular classroom. Students will be given opportunities to redo work to mastery just as students are given those opportunities in the regular day.

9. a. Please explain how the district will ensure implementation of Individual Education Programs (IEP) for students with disabilities (SWD), including how the students' Admissions and Release Committees (ARC) will be involved in planning for and making decisions related to the participation and needs of SWD on Non-Traditional Instruction days.

At each student's yearly ARC meeting, there will be a documented discussion on the planning/decision making for individual participation in the Non-Traditional Instruction Days. Dependent on the outcome of that discussion, the students will either have a separate packet of materials and assignments related to their individual education plan goals or their case manager will make the necessary accommodations to the general education packet of assignments for that individual student. This will be an agreed upon decision of the ARC. For those students not having a meeting prior to the Non-traditional instructional days, the student's case manager will work with the building level Special Education Consultant and Administrator to determine the most appropriate participation level for that student and parent will be informed.

- b. Please explain how the district will ensure the implementation of other student specific plans, such as Program Services Plans (PSP) for students who are English learners, and the Gifted Student Service Plans (GSSP) for students who are gifted and talented.

Gifted and Talented students will continue to be served according to their GSSP goals. Gifted and Talented teachers will assign instructional activities, or work collaboratively with teachers to develop enrichment activities for gifted and talented students. Gifted and Talented teachers will be available 9:00-12:00 and 4:00-6:00 to assist students if needed.

English Language Learner students will continue to be served according to their PSP goals.

10. In what ways will the district inform the community about Non-Traditional Instruction days and highlight the instruction and learning occurring on these days? (Facebook, Twitter, district websites, etc.)

Mercer County will use a variety of methods to communicate with the community about the Titan Learning Day. The information will be sent out on a One Call and also posted on our district web site, our district Facebook page and Twitter. Mercer County will also send out a letter in the fall explaining the purpose and procedure for the Titan Learning Day. The district will have a place on the district webpage where families can send pictures in showing students working on the Titan Learning Day. There will also be samples of lesson plans and a parent information guide posted on the district web site.

Definitions

ARC

An Admissions and Release Committee (ARC) is a group of individuals described in 707 KAR 1:320, Section 3, that is responsible for developing, reviewing, or revising an individual education program (IEP) for a child with a disability.

Blended Learning

Blended learning is a formal education program in which a student learns: (1) at least in part through online learning, with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace; (2) at least in part in a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home; (3) and the modalities along each student's learning path within a course or subject are connected to provide an integrated learning experience. (Clayton Christianson Institute for Disruptive Innovation)

Digital Learning

Digital learning is any instructional practice that effectively uses technology to strengthen a student's learning experience. It emphasizes high-quality instruction and provides access to challenging content, feedback through formative assessment, opportunities for learning anytime and anywhere, and individualized instruction. (Alliance for Excellent Education)

Equitable Instructional Materials

Equitable instructional materials are tools used to assist in student learning of various formats that provide equal levels of content, rigor, and opportunity to all learners.

GSSP

A Gifted Student Services Plan is an educational plan that matches a formally identified gifted student's interests needs, and abilities to differentiated service options and serves as the communication vehicle between the parents and school personnel. The determination of

appropriateness of level and type of services provided to a student shall be subject to continuous assessment. (Kentucky Department of Education)

IEP

An Individual Education Program (IEP) is a written statement for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised in accordance with 707 KAR 1:320.

Learning Management System (LMS)

A Learning Management System (or LMS) is a software that enables the management and delivery of learning content and resources to students. It is used to plan, implement, and assess a specific learning process. Most LMS systems are web-based to facilitate "anytime, anywhere" access to learning content and administration. (EdTech Review) Examples of a learning management system include Blackboard, Canvas, Edmodo, Moodle, Schoology, etc.

Non-Traditional Instruction Day

A Non-Traditional Instruction Day is a day in which school has been cancelled due to weather or other reasons and non-traditional instructional methods are implemented in order to maintain academic continuity and reduce student learning loss.

Non-Traditional Learning

Non-traditional learning is any process of gaining knowledge that occurs outside the traditional methods of delivery/mode, time, or setting.

PSP

A Program Services Plan is an educational plan for each student identified as having limited English proficiency. The PSP should include the following: the reasons for identification (results of the W-APT screener, and when available, the ACCESS for ELLs® annual language assessment), level of English proficiency, previous academic background and experience, cultural and language history, service delivery model/s for English language instruction, and all appropriate instructional and assessment accommodations and/or modifications. (Kentucky Department of Education)

Stakeholders

Stakeholder typically refers to anyone who is invested in the welfare and success of a school and its students, including administrators, teachers, staff members, students, parents, families, community members, local business leaders, and elected officials. Stakeholders may also be collective entities, such as local businesses, organizations, advocacy groups, committees, media outlets, and cultural institutions, in addition to organizations that represent specific groups. (Great Schools Partnership)

SWD

A student with a disability (SWD) is a child evaluated in accordance with 707 KAR 1:300, as meeting the criteria listed in the definitions in this section for autism, deaf-blindness, developmental delay, emotional-behavior disability, hearing impairment, mental disability, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, traumatic brain injury, or visual impairment which has an adverse effect on the child's educational performance and who, as a result, needs special education and related services.

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