



November 2, 2022

The first district-wide virtual learning day will be on November 8, 2022, as a number of our buildings are used as polling locations throughout the county. In order to ensure compliance with recently passed legislation for the 2022-2023 school year, MCS is reviewing the virtual learning processes district-wide. A memo to all state school leadership from the IDOE Office of Accountability outlined the impact of the legislation regarding virtual student instructional days.

#### Legislation outlined:

Under Indiana law, schools may satisfy the 180-day requirements by conducting:

- In-person instruction days;
- “*Virtual student instructional days*” that consist of at least 50% “*teacher-directed synchronous instruction,*” or
- A combination of both in-person and “*virtual student instructional days.*”

#### Definitions

**In-person Instruction** - instruction provided by a teacher in real-time and at the same place as the student.

**Teacher-Directed Synchronous Instruction** - Instruction delivered live and in real-time to a student by the student’s teacher.

**Asynchronous Learning** - self-paced virtual learning that can occur at different times and in different places that are particular to each student.

**Virtual Student Instruction Day** - an instructional day during which a school provides virtual instruction or remote learning to at least 50% of the students enrolled to attend in-person instruction at the school.

The recently passed legislation prohibits schools from conducting more than three “*virtual student instructional days*” that consist of more than 50% asynchronous learning. If a school corporation exceeds this threshold due to extraordinary circumstances, schools may request a waiver in order to count the day towards the 180-day requirement. If a district does not offer 50% synchronous instruction, then any day out of school must be made up and the school year extended.

#### What this means for students

Fortunately, for Madison students, this won’t be a drastic change to what already exists. Boiled down, the legislation translated means that 50% of our virtual learning day is synchronous instruction in order to qualify as a day of school. For grades 1-6, 50% is 2.5 hours and for grades 7-12 it is 3 hours.

Currently, during a virtual learning day, students log into Google Classroom for required, scheduled class times with teachers. Each level, elementary and secondary, varies slightly due to schedules, but students are required to be online during the scheduled class period for interactive lessons with their teachers.

As a way of further aligning virtual learning, the district has formed a committee of teachers from all instructional levels to put together a template instructional model that would be implemented across the district. “We are really looking for a system or common structure for virtual learning in Madison schools,” Superintendent Dr. Teresa Brown directed in an email to the committee. “Things like *What are the expectations for all teachers? Special Areas/Special Education teachers? What supports are we putting in place to help students with connectivity issues to get things done and understand the content?*”

There will be a focus on mentoring and professional development around virtual teaching, and alignment of schedules so that elementary and intermediate-level students may be on different schedules to help manage schedules at home. Some of the feedback we have received from families is that when families have students in multiple buildings it can be a challenge to get everyone online when they need to be there, especially if internet access and reliability are a concern. “We understand that our elementary and intermediate students may need more guidance while learning from home and we want to be able to accommodate that need,” Dr. Brown continued.

### Challenges & Opportunities

As with most districts within the state, we have areas in our community with limited access to reliable internet service. Teachers are aware of these isolated situations within their classes and students are given extended time to complete assignments, if and when this situation arises. In January 2022, volunteer community leaders, as well as county commissioners and county council members, established the Jefferson County Broadband and Digital Inclusion Taskforce. To learn more about the project to make Jefferson County broadband ready, visit their website [Jefferson County Broadband Project](#).

We will be communicating more specific plans for the first district-wide virtual (synchronous) learning day with families as things finalize today or tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Dr. Teresa Brown, Superintendent