

SENATE BILL 676

F3

11r2789
CF HB 1128

By: **Senator Edwards**

Introduced and read first time: February 3, 2021

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

Senate action: Adopted with floor amendments

Read second time: February 27, 2021

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Garrett County – Public Schools – Virtual Education Days Pilot Program**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Garrett County Virtual Education Days Pilot Program;
4 authorizing the Garrett County Superintendent to order a virtual education day
5 instead of closing a public school under certain circumstances; requiring the county
6 superintendent to notify a public school principal as soon as possible after the county
7 superintendent makes a certain decision; requiring a principal who receives a certain
8 notice to immediately notify students, parents, and school staff of the
9 implementation of a virtual education day; providing for the content of a virtual
10 education day; requiring a certain school implementing a virtual education day to
11 make accommodations for certain students and school staff; requiring a certain
12 school implementing a virtual education day to establish a method for sending and
13 receiving certain assignments for students who lack Internet access; ~~requiring~~
14 encouraging the county superintendent to order virtual education days only under
15 certain circumstances; requiring the county superintendent to notify the Garrett
16 County Board of Education of the decision to order a virtual education day for
17 multiple consecutive school days; requiring the county superintendent to arrange for
18 the continued provision of certain services under certain circumstances; providing
19 that a virtual education day will reduce by a certain number of days the number of
20 days incorporated into the school's calendar for a certain purpose; prohibiting the
21 county superintendent from ordering a virtual education day in a certain school year
22 under certain circumstances; requiring the county board to adopt a certain policy;
23 requiring the Garrett County Board of Education to submit a certain report to certain
24 committees of the General Assembly on or before a certain date; providing for the

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 application of this Act; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally
 2 relating to virtual education days in Garrett County.

3 BY adding to

4 Article – Education

5 Section 7–103.2

6 Annotated Code of Maryland

7 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2020 Supplement)

8 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
 9 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

10 **Article – Education**

11 **7–103.2.**

12 (A) THIS SECTION APPLIES ONLY IN GARRETT COUNTY.

13 (B) THERE IS A GARRETT COUNTY VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAYS PILOT
 14 PROGRAM.

15 ~~(B)~~ (C) THE SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION ~~(F)~~ (G) OF THIS SECTION, THE
 16 GARRETT COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT MAY ORDER A VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY
 17 INSTEAD OF CLOSING A PUBLIC SCHOOL IN THE EVENT OF:

18 ~~(1) A NATURAL DISASTER;~~

19 ~~(2) A CIVIC DISASTER;~~

20 ~~(3) INCLEMENT INCLEMENT WEATHER; OR~~

21 ~~(4) ANY OTHER EVENT THAT WOULD OTHERWISE PREVENT NORMAL~~
 22 ~~SCHOOL ATTENDANCE, AT THE DISCRETION OF THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT.~~

23 ~~(C)~~ (D) (1) THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT SHALL NOTIFY ~~A~~ THE
 24 PRINCIPALS OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL PRINCIPAL SCHOOLS IN THE COUNTY OF THE
 25 DECISION TO ORDER A VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY FOR THE SCHOOL SCHOOLS IN THE
 26 COUNTY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER THE DECISION IS MADE.

27 (2) A PRINCIPAL WHO RECEIVES NOTICE OF A VIRTUAL EDUCATION
 28 DAY ORDERED UNDER SUBSECTION ~~(B)~~ (C) OF THIS SECTION IMMEDIATELY SHALL
 29 NOTIFY THE STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND SCHOOL STAFF OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
 30 A VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY.

1 ~~(D)~~ (E) (1) A VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY SHALL CONSIST OF EDUCATION
2 SERVICES, DELIVERED REMOTELY, THAT ARE AS CLOSE AS IS PRACTICABLE TO THE
3 EDUCATION SERVICES THAT WOULD HAVE OCCURRED IN PERSON HAD THE SCHOOL
4 BEEN OPEN.

5 (2) A SCHOOL IMPLEMENTING A VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY SHALL
6 MAKE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS AND SCHOOL STAFF WHO DO NOT HAVE
7 EASY ACCESS TO THE INTERNET.

8 (3) A SCHOOL IMPLEMENTING A VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY SHALL
9 ESTABLISH A METHOD FOR SENDING ASSIGNMENTS TO STUDENTS AND FOR
10 RECEIVING COMPLETED ASSIGNMENTS FROM STUDENTS WHO LACK INTERNET
11 ACCESS.

12 ~~(E)~~ (F) (1) THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT IS ENCOURAGED TO ORDER
13 VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAYS ONLY WHEN THERE IS A LIKELIHOOD OF A WEATHER
14 EVENT REQUIRING SCHOOL CLOSURES FOR MULTIPLE CONSECUTIVE SCHOOL DAYS.

15 (2) IF THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT DETERMINES IT IS NECESSARY
16 TO ORDER A VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY FOR MULTIPLE CONSECUTIVE SCHOOL DAYS,
17 THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT SHALL NOTIFY THE GARRETT COUNTY BOARD OF
18 EDUCATION.

19 ~~(2)~~ (3) IF A PUBLIC SCHOOL IS ORDERED TO IMPLEMENT A
20 VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY FOR MULTIPLE CONSECUTIVE SCHOOL DAYS UNDER
21 PARAGRAPH ~~(1)~~ (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT SHALL
22 ARRANGE, TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, FOR THE CONTINUED PROVISION OF ALL
23 NORMAL SERVICES REQUIRED UNDER THIS ARTICLE TO ALL STUDENTS WHO
24 REQUIRE THE SERVICES, INCLUDING MEAL SERVICES PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE
25 WITH SUBTITLES 6 AND 7 OF THIS TITLE.

26 ~~(F)~~ (G) (1) IF THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT ORDERS A VIRTUAL
27 EDUCATION DAY, THE VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY WILL REDUCE BY 1 DAY THE
28 NUMBER OF DAYS INCORPORATED IN THE SCHOOL'S CALENDAR FOR SCHOOL
29 CLOSURES DUE TO SEVERE WEATHER OR OTHER EMERGENCIES IN THE SCHOOL
30 YEAR.

31 (2) IF THERE ARE NO DAYS IN A SCHOOL'S CALENDAR FOR SCHOOL
32 CLOSURES DUE TO SEVERE WEATHER OR OTHER EMERGENCIES IN THE SCHOOL
33 YEAR REMAINING IN A SCHOOL YEAR, THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT MAY NOT
34 ORDER A VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY FOR THE SCHOOL IN THE SCHOOL YEAR.

35 ~~(G)~~ (H) THE GARRETT COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION SHALL ADOPT A
36 POLICY TO IMPLEMENT THIS SECTION.

1 **(I) ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 2023, THE GARRETT COUNTY BOARD OF**
 2 **EDUCATION SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND**
 3 **ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE AND THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WAYS**
 4 **AND MEANS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT**
 5 **ARTICLE, ON:**

6 **(1) THE NUMBER OF SCHOOL DAYS THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT**
 7 **ORDERED THE IMPLEMENTATION OF VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAYS;**

8 **(2) WHETHER THE VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAYS IMPLEMENTED WERE**
 9 **FOR SINGLE DAY SCHOOL CLOSURES OR MULTIPLE CONSECUTIVE SCHOOL DAY**
 10 **CLOSURES; AND**

11 **(3) THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE STUDENT INSTRUCTION ON VIRTUAL**
 12 **EDUCATION DAYS.**

13 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
 14 1, 2021. It shall remain effective for a period of 2 years and 3 months and, at the end of
 15 September 30, 2023, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly,
 16 shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.