

House Bill 1306 - Howard County – Public Schools – Alternative Instruction Model Policy
House Ways and Means Committee
March 10, 2022

- assent that there will be four hours of synchronous instruction on a virtual education day;
- acknowledgement that daily attendance will be taken;
- how students and staff will have access to devices and Wi-Fi;
- the continued implementation of IEPs during virtual instruction (including specially designed instruction, related services, supplementary aides and services, and accommodations);
- public presentation and discussion at a local school board meeting;
- the establishment of a communication plan to students, teachers, parents/guardians, etc., that the inclement weather day will or will not be virtual and the plan for instruction; and
- any other factors that are unique to their local school system.

Seventeen local school systems (Allegany, [Anne Arundel](#), [Baltimore County](#), [Carroll](#), Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, [Garrett](#), [Kent](#), [Montgomery](#), Prince George's, Queen Anne's, [Somerset](#), [Talbot](#), Washington, [Wicomico](#), and [Worcester](#)) submitted these plans to MSDE. This statewide approach protects high quality learning opportunities for students. The Department is supportive of including other extreme circumstances beyond inclement weather in the list of situations where resorting to an alternative instructional model may be appropriate.

Research from across the country has made it clear that for the vast majority of students virtual learning is not an effective form of instruction. Therefore, ensuring that consistent and comprehensive guardrails are in place for any alternative instructional models that may involve the use of virtual instruction is crucial to ensure that these programs do not adversely affect the learning of the majority of students.

MSDE encourages the committee to look at the statewide legislation that the Department has offered robust feedback and amendments on in the opposite chamber that enhances this concept to meet positive outcomes for students.

We respectfully request that you consider this information as you deliberate **House Bill 1306**. Please contact Ary Amerikaner, at 410-767-0090, or ary.amerikaner@maryland.gov, for any additional information.