

SENATE BILL 717

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2lr2205

By: **Senators Simonaire and Rosapepe**

Introduced and read first time: February 7, 2022

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Schools – Virtual Education Days – Authorization**

3 FOR the purpose of providing that a county board of education may authorize a county
4 superintendent of schools, under certain circumstances, to provide virtual education
5 days to students instead of closing the public schools in the county because of severe
6 weather conditions; requiring a county superintendent to take certain actions and
7 make certain accommodations if the county superintendent decides to provide a
8 virtual education day for public school students in the county; and generally relating
9 to days of virtual education.

10 BY adding to

11 Article – Education

12 Section 7–103.2

13 Annotated Code of Maryland

14 (2018 Replacement Volume and 2021 Supplement)

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

17 **Article – Education**

18 **7–103.2.**

19 **(A) SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION, A COUNTY BOARD MAY**
20 **AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT, IN CASES OF SEVERE WEATHER**
21 **CONDITIONS, TO PROVIDE VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAYS TO STUDENTS INSTEAD OF**
22 **CLOSING THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN THE COUNTY DURING A SEVERE WEATHER EVENT.**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 **(B) BEFORE A COUNTY BOARD MAY AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY**
2 **SUPERINTENDENT TO PROVIDE VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAYS TO STUDENTS IN**
3 **ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION, THE COUNTY BOARD SHALL:**

4 **(1) DISCUSS THIS TOPIC AT AN OPEN MEETING; AND**

5 **(2) VOTE AFFIRMATIVELY TO AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY**
6 **SUPERINTENDENT TO PROVIDE VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAYS TO STUDENTS DURING A**
7 **SEVERE WEATHER EVENT.**

8 **(C) A COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT MAY DECIDE TO PROVIDE A DAY OF**
9 **VIRTUAL EDUCATION FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE COUNTY ONLY IF:**

10 **(1) THE LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM HAS USED ALL THE DAYS**
11 **INCORPORATED INTO ITS CALENDAR FOR SCHOOL CLOSURES FOR SEVERE**
12 **WEATHER CONDITIONS;**

13 **(2) THE COUNTY BOARD HAS AUTHORIZED THE COUNTY**
14 **SUPERINTENDENT TO PROVIDE VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAYS TO STUDENTS IN**
15 **ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION; AND**

16 **(3) THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT DETERMINES THAT SEVERE**
17 **WEATHER CONDITIONS ARE LIKELY TO PREVENT NORMAL ATTENDANCE AT THE**
18 **PUBLIC SCHOOL.**

19 **(D) (1) IF A COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT DECIDES TO PROVIDE A VIRTUAL**
20 **EDUCATION DAY FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE COUNTY, THE COUNTY**
21 **SUPERINTENDENT SHALL NOTIFY THE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**
22 **AFTER THE DECISION IS MADE.**

23 **(2) A SCHOOL PRINCIPAL WHO RECEIVES NOTICE OF A VIRTUAL**
24 **EDUCATION DAY IMMEDIATELY SHALL NOTIFY THE STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND**
25 **SCHOOL STAFF OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY.**

26 **(E) (1) A VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY SHALL CONSIST OF SYNCHRONOUS**
27 **AND ASYNCHRONOUS INSTRUCTION DESIGNED TO MAXIMIZE THE ADVANTAGES OF**
28 **ONLINE ACCESS.**

29 **(2) A PUBLIC SCHOOL THAT IMPLEMENTS A VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY**
30 **SHALL MAKE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS AND SCHOOL STAFF WHO DO NOT**
31 **HAVE EASY ACCESS TO THE INTERNET.**

1 **(3) A COUNTY BOARD THAT AUTHORIZES A COUNTY**
2 **SUPERINTENDENT TO PROVIDE A VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY SHALL ADEQUATELY**
3 **DESIGN THE VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY MODEL BEFORE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE**
4 **FIRST VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY.**

5 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July
6 1, 2022.