

NPSD Virtual Learning - Employee Guidance Document

Overview

In 2017, Governor Gina Raimondo, signed a bill into law that allows districts to submit detailed plans for their schools to conduct instruction through virtual education when schools have been closed due to inclement weather or other emergency.

North Providence Schools may use Virtual Instructional Days during emergency or inclement weather for a maximum of three days (or more) per Rhode Island Department of Education guidance. Virtual Instructional Days will be announced in a similar manner that school closing/delays are announced. Keep in mind that not all snow/closure days will be Virtual Instructional Days. The maximum number of Virtual Instructional Days that may be used in any given school year is three(subject to change) . District administration will decide if/when Virtual Instructional Days will occur.

North Providence Public Schools has invested in a technology infrastructure over the last five years that supports the integration of technology into instruction, leveraging the technology to expand the classroom. Technology has allowed us to improve our capability to deliver high quality instruction that reflects the rapidly changing world our children face requiring new skills. Virtual Instruction can provide individualized instruction, that focuses on mastery, as well as additional opportunities and course offerings to students. North Providence Schools has been exploring online instruction in varying degrees with success and currently uses online credit recovery, alternate education online classes and blended learning instruction. It is our hope that the Virtual Instructional Days will provide our students with an online experience that will be the foundation to future growth and success.

North Providence Schools Virtual Instructional Goal

Virtual Instructional Days will be used to maintain the momentum of learning, minimizing the interruptions caused by emergency days. Providing opportunities for virtual instruction not only supports the district's goal of integrating technology into instruction but also provides more effective instruction than days added to the end of the school year.

Employee Hours

- ★ Certified Staff members are expected to work from home on Virtual Instructional Days from 8:30 A.M. – 2:30 P.M.
- ★ Instructional Assistants/Paraprofessionals will have options to choose from on Virtual Instruction Days. Instructional Assistants will notify administration of chosen options prior to September 30 or as HR requires via Google Form. Instructional Assistants' options for Virtual Instructional Days include:
 - The employee may engage in online Paraprofessional PD
 - The employee may use a Personal Day.
 - The employee can opt not to be paid.
 - The employee can make up missed time by making arrangements with the administrator to extend the work day or add days in June.
 - The employee may participate in at home/online professional development.

Student Assistance/Teacher Availability

Teachers will be available via their npsd.us email directly from Google Classroom or any other email product. Google Classroom will be the platform used in grades K-12 to post student assignments, facilitate discussions, and submit work. If students need technical assistance or have general technical questions and/or concerns, they may call the school Virtual Instruction Information Line: 401-233 -1100 x 14452 or email virtuallearning@npsd.k12.ri.us. If needed, the message will be relayed to the teacher/principal.

Special Educators will make necessary accommodations and modifications for students with IEPs. Accommodations may include changes in the following: presentation of a lesson, instructional strategies, student response format and procedures, time/scheduling, and/or assignment structure. Modifications are the changes made to provide a student with opportunities to participate meaningfully and productively. Modifications may include changes in: instructional level, content/curriculum, and/or performance criteria.

Accessibility features are available on a chromebook and are easily activated. All chromebooks are equipped with both a microphone and a camera. See specific instructions at [Google's support site](#).

Employee Notification of Virtual Instructional Days

Inclement weather cancellations and announcement of a Virtual Instructional Day will be relayed through the school's notification phone & email system, district website, and local TV/radio stations.

Professional Development

All teachers will be provided annual Virtual Instructional Professional Development. Professional development will ensure asynchronous instruction that considers developmental appropriateness. All lessons/assignments are to be standards-based with an identified objective, clear lesson description and detailed student product description. Lessons and academic tasks are to demonstrate comparable levels of rigor between online and offline instruction. The PD will include access to support using Google Classroom platform as a classroom management practice for virtual environments as well as time for collaboration among colleagues to develop and refine virtual content. Google Classroom/Google Suite will be used in grades 3-12 to post student assignments, facilitate discussions, and submit work. It is to be noted that students regularly access Google Classroom on typical school days. Any teacher that has questions about utilizing Google Classroom may contact their school principal for assistance. For more information, go to

- Google Classroom Overview as a Tool:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0DCOe9v9CuM>
- Online PD for Google Classroom: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UxXqKhxoqYg>

Fair Use and Copyright Requirements

All faculty must continually adhere to Fair Use and Copyright Requirements. The Virtual Instructional assignment and lessons are no exception. “Fair use is a legal doctrine that promotes freedom of expression by permitting the unlicensed use of copyright-protected works in certain circumstances. Section 107 of the Copyright Act provides the statutory framework for determining whether something is a fair use and identifies certain types of uses—such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research—as examples of activities that may qualify as fair use.” <https://www.copyright.gov/fair-use/more-info.html>

Virtual Instructional Lessons and Assignments

All virtual instructional lessons and assignments are to be tightly aligned with the articulated curriculum, instructional rubrics, and unit plans. The level of academic rigor must be comparable to offline instruction. Accountability for students will rely on submissions and assessment of work. Teachers will assess the student’s work and determine if the student has met the instructional goals for the day. The actual amount of time online is less important than the work produced and/or created by the student to demonstrate learning and mastery of learning targets. An effective virtual instructional experience will: 1) *Provide students with modeling/demonstration/guidance material (i.e. video, podcast presentation, reading assignment, website module, exemplar.)* 2) *Ask students to recall what they have learned, this portion of the lesson shows that they student actively participated in the previous step. And 3) Students apply what they have learned with a high-level; thinking activity. This type of problem solving activity incorporates critical thinking and independent thought.*

If the Virtual Instructional Day is announced or acknowledged to be likely before students leave school, students can open the files they need while in school, work on them offline at home, and the changes will sync when they return to school. Students without internet connection have the opportunity to complete work over the five days following return to school, allowing for students to make arrangements to use the after-school open computer labs. Some “paper-based” options will also be available to early elementary students, when appropriate.

All student subgroups are to be planned for and differentiation strategies will be used. Individual supports, services, and accommodations for students with an Individual Education Program (IEP), Individual Learning Plan (ILP), or a Section 504 Plan are to be reviewed, discussed, and agreed upon at the student’s annual meeting, a Section 504 meeting, or general education plan meeting. All students will be provided access to instruction in all subject areas.

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