SENATE BILL 717

F1 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

Public Schools - Virtual Education Days - Authorization

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

10 BY adding to

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- 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.

- 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 SUPERINTENDENT TO PROVIDE A VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY SHALL ADEQUATELY DESIGN THE VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY MODEL BEFORE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FIRST VIRTUAL EDUCATION DAY.
- $\,\,$ SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 6 $\,\,$ 1, 2022.