

## Code Orange FAQ's

*From the PWCS website*

### **Are Code Red days going away?**

No. PWCS will continue to have Code Red days this school year and beyond when conditions warrant their use in severe weather emergencies that may impact access to remote work or learning, such as potential power outages. Students will not be assigned required work on Code Red days, and teachers will take the missed time into consideration of deadlines or test scheduling. Students may take advantage of a Code Red day to optionally catch-up on or for voluntary work on assignments already assigned. All full-time employees are paid for Code Red days but are not required to work, except for inclement weather personnel.

### **How do recent changes to Virginia law affect weather-related and other emergency closures in PWCS?**

During the 2021 legislative session, the Virginia General Assembly passed a bill (House Bill 1790/Senate Bill 1132) allowing up to 10 unscheduled remote learning days (full or partial) to apply to the 180-day or 990-hour instructional time requirement when the closure is due to severe weather and other emergencies. Per the [Virginia Department of Education](#), if school divisions are able to provide instruction and services to each student on these days, the instructional time can be counted toward the length of the school term and core instruction hour requirements for the school year.

### **What is a Code Orange?**

School and office buildings are closed. Live, virtual classes will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Staff are expected to work remotely.

### **When will Code Orange be used?**

Code Orange exists as one tool in the toolbox and may or may not be used. Emergency closures place a burden on families and are sought to be avoided to the greatest extent practicable. However, emergencies vary in scope and impact, and there may be times when an extended series of Code Red closures would negatively

impact learning or a two-hour delay is insufficient. As such, having the Code Orange option is an alternative plan that has a clearly developed plan ahead of any emergency.

## **Will students receive live virtual instruction on Code Orange days during the 2023–24 school year?**

Yes, all students will receive synchronous, live virtual instruction on Code Orange days during the 2023-24 school year.

## **If my student is an all-virtual student or takes one or more virtual courses through Virtual Prince William will anything change on Code Orange days?**

No, students enrolled in the PWCS K-8 Virtual Academy, Virtual Prince William, and Virtual Virginia should follow their normal daily virtual schedule.

## **What are the expectations for Code Orange virtual learning days?**

- All students will receive live virtual instruction from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Instruction will begin at 9 a.m. for all schools and end at 2 p.m.
- All classes will start with live (synchronous) instruction.
- Students will have a one-hour break for lunch.
- Time will be provided for students to go to the restroom between Zoom sessions.

## **Where can I find my child’s Code Orange live virtual schedule?**

All elementary, middle, and high schools will be following the same Code Orange schedule by level. Schools will post their Code Orange schedule on their website. [See sample schedules.](#)

## **What if my family does not have home internet access?**

[Learn how you may qualify for free home internet.](#)

## **How will Section 504 or IEP accommodations and services be provided? Are there other considerations for students receiving special education services?**

School staff will review each student's IEP and Section 504 plan. Accommodations and services that can be provided in a virtual setting should be provided to students. Concerns regarding a student's ability to access virtual instruction due to the nature of their disability will be addressed through the IEP process.

## **How will English learner and gifted education services be provided?**

English learner and gifted services that are applicable to the virtual setting should be implemented. These services should mirror, to the greatest extent possible, the model of services provided in person.

## **How will attendance be taken, and students be counted as present on Code Orange days?**

Students will need to turn their cameras on and participate in the class to be counted as present. Blurred or other backgrounds can be utilized by students.

## **What should families do if their child is having trouble logging in on a Code Orange day?**

Families should contact the [PWCS Help Desk](#).

## **What if a child forgets their school-issued device at school?**

If a student forgets their school-issued device, they can use another device or phone to access most applications online, including [Canvas](#), [Office 365](#), and [Zoom](#).

## **Will any schools or offices be open on Code Orange days?**

Schools and office buildings will not be open on Code Orange days, business may be conducted virtually as appropriate.

## **Since PWCS builds in hours to ensure that schools meet the minimum state requirement for instructional hours, will the school year end early if we have a mild winter with few to no weather-related closures?**

The short answer is no.

As a learning organization, PWCS values the importance of as much instructional time as possible for our students. The current PWCS planned school year exceeds the 990-hour state requirement because of the length of the student day. The additional time (hours) is converted to “days” that can be used in the event of inclement weather. An advantage of the built-in hours is that days do not need to be added on at the end of the year or to the school day, as was done in years past when too many snow days were used.

There is no means for days to be given back at the end of the year because those additional “days” are simply the excess time beyond 990 hours and, if the days were given back, PWCS would fall short of the required 180-day school year.

For more on codes and operations during inclement weather, refer to [Reg. 404.04-1](#).

## Code Orange Sample Schedules

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### Sample Schedule For Elementary Schools

<b>Block</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Minutes</b>
Instructional Block	9 – 11 a.m.	120
Lunch/Recess	11 a.m. – Noon	60
Instructional Block	Noon – 2 p.m.	120