

Managing School Closures, Teacher Shortage & Remote Learning
A Legislative Response 2022

State Statute provides local school boards, administrators, and their schools the necessary flexibility to manage pandemics, natural disasters, and teacher shortages.

1. Schools are required to have 1,116 hours per year (or 186 days) K.S.A. 72-3115
2. Schools may remote learn, school or district-wide, for no more than 40 hours per year (approximately 6 days) for any reason. K.S.A. 72-5180
3. Schools may close buildings or the district for any period of time and for any reason (including teacher shortage); however, those lost hours must be made up, in-person, in the remaining school year.
4. Individual students may remote learn if approved by their local school board (and names sent to State Board) if the student cannot reasonably attend school in person due to an illness, medical condition, injury or any extraordinary circumstances (this would include quarantine). This must be applied on an individual student basis and is not required. Schools are not required to provide remote learning on an individual basis, but if they do, an application for exceeding the 40 hours must be submitted to local school boards and State Board. To note: students absent from school for any reason may makeup school work through assistance from asynchronous instruction in any manner deemed appropriate by the school without submitting names to local board and state board (e.g. pre-recorded instruction or activity, assignments on-line or in traditional form, work that might be done at a time not scheduled by the regular school day, etc.).
5. Schools may exceed the 40-hour remote learning limitation upon application by school district to State Board for a disaster – conditions resulting from widespread or severe property damage. Waivers may be requested for property damage (K.S.A. 20 Supp. 72-3117). Waivers do not require hours to be made up by schools. Note: waiver statute reverted back to pre-pandemic criteria (closures related to pandemic do not qualify for waivers or extended application for remote learning). Schools may NOT apply to exceed the 40-hour remote learning parameters for their district or a school within their district based on pandemic, staffing, or non-property damage reasons.
6. Students may opt for virtual school, asynchronous instruction, from 133 different schools if distance/on-line learning is preferred. Though the count date for funding is in September, many districts do allow students to move from in-person to virtual at semester.
7. Schools may choose to remote learn anytime, for any reason, but will receive virtual learning state aid adjustment of \$5,000 for participating students.