



Request for Additional Distance Learning Days

LEA Name: Village Green Virtual Charter School
Point of Contact: Rochelle Y. Baker, M. Ed. MSW;
Executive Director / Head of School

Email Address: rbaker@vgcs.org

Phone Number: (401) 831-2878 ext. 114

Types of additional distance learning days being requested for approval. As a reminder, LEAs can only seek approval for no more than 5 additional distance learning days (not including days needed for quarantine. Quarantine days must meet this criteria to count for a school day).

1) More than four distance learning days that will be paired with educator professional learning days:

No

AND/OR

2) Distance learning days that will be used, if needed, for emergency school closures due to inclement weather or other unexpected emergencies:

Yes

Assurances

Instructions: Provide assurances by marking an “X” in each box next to each item to demonstrate that you have incorporated it into your plan.

- Utilized a planning team or representative group of stakeholders to create our plan.
- Our plan includes a description of the instruction that will be provided on each of our distance learning days.
- Develop a plan to revisit students’ Individualized Education Plans, 504 plans, and multi-lingual learner services specific to distance learning days in partnership with teachers and parents to reflect evolving needs.
- Ensure that all students have access to the technology necessary to access and complete Distance learning tasks.
- Approved plans will be posted on the LEA webpage.

- X LEA calendar is included in plan with distance learning days clearly identified (if they are to be paired with professional learning days). As a reminder, calendars should also be included with this document for the approval process.
- X LEA calendar will be updated as distance learning days as used.

Explanations

Instructions: Complete the following fields with narratives or attach/link to relevant documents or artifacts.

1. Describe the type of learning that will be occurring on your distance learning days (synchronous, asynchronous, or a combination). As a reminder, if you are requesting distance learning days to be used during inclement weather or other emergency situations, your plan must include how students will receive asynchronous instruction on these days.

Village Green Virtual was chartered in 2013 to develop a high school program of study using the Edgenuity e-courseware platform as its primary curriculum delivery system. Students have access to their courses 24/7 anywhere in the world that Internet connectivity is available. All VGV teachers are required to maintain a Google Classroom for courses they teach. The purpose is for providing students with course materials, assignments, and other resources. The school was designed for distance learning from Day 1 and the transition between in-person to DL or DL back to in-person has been seamless since the first official day of COVID-19 Closure (Monday, March 23, 2020).

For DL days, we will run the same schedule as if in-person. First thing in the morning, Students check in with their teacher teams via Google Meet for attendance taking and announcements and expectations for the day. Prior to the students' check-in, all VGV teachers, administrators, and academic deans check in via Google Meet. Students and teachers will follow the same daily class schedule as if in-person. We use both asynchronous and synchronous instruction. Students attend virtual classes on DL days via Google Meet. The number of activities completed per day per student, time off task, days off task, etc. are automatically recorded through the Edgenuity platform. Class attendance is taken. In cases of students not logging in classes, phone calls are made home. Our two academic deans will frequently check-in to classes. They will meet with teacher teams via Google Meet at the end of a DL day as they routinely do during in-person days.

By the nature of the technology required for the VGV model, we have a 2+:1 device-to-student ratio which includes Chromebooks issued to students who need them. At the beginning of every school year we check and work with all students that they have Internet connectivity.

Perfecting DL has been a continuous initiative since March of 2020. Our goal has been closing the gap between DL and in-person. Extensive research continues to be done within in VGV. A 37-page white paper entitled "Unmasking Village Green Virtual's COVID-19 Closure Evidence-Based

Experience: Measures of Distance Learning Sustainability,” by John D. Butler, Ph.D., PE was published in July, 2020. The report included student productivity data, attendance data, and two snapshots (i.e., surveys). The purpose of the latter was to glean VGV student attitudes towards their distance learning experience (LX) in order to make evidence-based decisions to improve the teaching and learning in the DL environment. Two anonymous surveys were planned—one approximately 27 instructional days into Closure which began on March 23, 2020 and a final one administered during the last three days of the school year:

- 1) Mid-Closure Anonymous Student Survey (administration window: April 28–May4, 2020)
- 2) End-of-Closure Anonymous Student Survey (administration window: June 15–17, 2020)

The following is offered as evidence to support how serious VGV takes in addressing the challenges to minimizing the potential student learning gaps that DL due to COVID-19 related school closures present:

In the final report, the author (Butler, 2020) provided the following summary of major findings:

- The difference between Closure average attendance (89.0%) and Pre-Closure average attendance (90.3) was not statistically significant ($p = .08401$) at the $p < .05$ level. The overall attendance for the complete 2019-2020 180-day school year was 90.1%.
- The average attendance percent during the 54-day Closure and during the 126-day Pre-Closure were higher than the similar time frames of both previous years (2018-2019 and 2017-2018).
- The 218 students completed 68,979 externally validated Edgenuity online activities during the 54-day VGV school Closure. This total significantly exceeded the number of activities completed during the same 54-day time period in the two previous school years: 46,301 in 2018 and 54,816 in 2017.
- There was a positive increase in students’ feelings toward their distance learning experience between the Mid-Closure and End-of-Closure surveys (increased from 90.4% to 94.5%). Students who responded with “poor” or “very poor” decreased from 9.6% to 5.5% between the Mid-Closure and End-of-Closure surveys.
- Closure survey respondents increased from 90.4% to 94.5%
- When asked about which of three re-opening models they would prefer, 32.7% of the students would like to attend school full time as it was before Closure; 41.8% of the students wanted a hybrid model where half the time is in school face-to-face and the other half of time is distance learning from home; and, 25.5% of the students wanted to continue with distance learning full time from home.
- Sixty percent of the students felt they had learned as much (or more) distance learning during Closure than they did attending school every day.
- Eighteen percent of the students reported that their homelife was negatively affected with frequent stressful situations during the day during Closure.

- From the Mid-Closure Survey, 95.3% of the students reported they had “little to no” technology issues. From the End-of-Closure Survey, that percentage decreased from 95.2% to 90.9%.
- The 2019-2020 school year of COVID-19 Closure had the highest number of Edgenuity activities completed compared to the two previous years for the respective time frames of Closure and Pre-Closure.
- When asked if the special report cards sent out every two weeks during Closure helped motivate students, one out of three (32.7%) students agreed or strongly agreed.
- VGV calculates a Customer Satisfaction Rating (CSR) whereby the students are treated as customers and the VGV instruction is the service. From the Mid-Closure Survey, the CSR was 90.4% and increased to 94.5% on the End-of-Closure Survey.
- The perception from students that they received enough support from all of their teachers increased from 55.5% at Mid-Closure to 79.5% at the End-of-Closure.
- A total of 715 Edgenuity courses were completed during Closure from a population of 217 students. However, the courses were started before Closure. But, the total number does indicate that there was productivity occurring from distance learning during Closure.

Note: This 2020 study provided us with substantial evidence-based data to identify multiple areas to focus on improving the teaching and learning in DL that we utilize. We continue to identify and employ “best practices” should DL be required.

2. Describe how your plan explicitly supports the instructional needs of multi-lingual learners, differently-abled students, and any other student population in need of additional consideration.

We will continue to offer a full program of supports and services, including all MLL, IEP (academic and related services), with MTSS team oversight. Our special educators and MLL teacher will continue the same scheduled class “push-in” times as well as their individual and small group meetings during DL (via Google Meet) as they have done in-person.

3) Describe how attendance will be determined on distance learning days.

Student attendance will be taken during the morning check-in using Google Meet and recorded in a shared Google Sheet. This data is uploaded into ALMA (our SIS system). A phone call will be made home for those students not online at check-in. Classroom teachers will take attendance and record in the appropriate shared Google Sheet. Students must be online, show their faces, and must participate if in a synchronous teaching class at least in some minimal way to be marked present for the class.

4) Describe how your plan will be communicated with all necessary stakeholder groups (staff, families, students, community members).

VGV uses ALMA (our SIS e-platform) to communicate with all stakeholders including staff, families, students, Board members, and community members. We provide Spanish translations in communications. Edgenuity's Parent Portal provides 24/7 access for parents to view daily progress reports of their child' academic performance on Edgenuity courses.