



With several schools across the state closing their doors for severe weather recently, you may have been hearing about something called alternative methods of instruction or AMI.

The legislature has passed a few laws in recent years giving schools more options to make up time rather than simply extending the year into the summer. Alternative methods of instruction is the latest option.

Act 862 of 2017 allows a public school district and open-enrollment public charter school to develop a plan for alternative methods of instruction to be used on days when the superintendent closes school due to exceptional or emergency circumstances.

As stated in the legislation, the Commissioner of Education may grant up to the equivalent of ten student attendance days for public school districts that have an alternative instruction plan approved by

the commissioner. The alternative methods can include virtual learning online or even packets that are sent home ahead of time.

Schools can make use of the alternative methods for snow days or even when schools need to close for a contagious illness outbreak or utility outage.

The public school district's alternative instruction plan shall demonstrate how teaching and learning in the public school district will not be negatively impacted by the use of alternative methods of instruction.

In the application, schools must describe how technology and resources will be available to the students if needed. Schools must also detail teacher responsibilities, how attendance will be determined, and how the district will communicate the expectations with parent and students for an AMI day. So far, 175 districts in the state have had their plans approved.

This is just one more way to ensure our students have the most instruction time possible before taking standardized tests in the spring. We look forward to hearing how the legislation is impacting our students

in the months ahead. To learn more about the program visit www.arkansased.gov