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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### DIGITAL LEARNING DAYS IN BARTOW COUNTY

BARTOW COUNTY, Ga. (January 7, 2019) – A new year brings a new innovative change to the Bartow County School System inclement weather plan. Digital Learning Days will now be implemented in an effort to lessen the academic impact and calendar changes that can occur when schools must close.

Digital Learning Days will primarily be assigned when students miss more than one day of school due to inclement weather closures. No more than two Digital Learning Days will be issued during one school closing event.

During a Digital Learning Day, students will either be encouraged to work on printed materials distributed prior to the school closure or their school-issued laptop to access assignments in Schoology, the District’s Learning Management System. Teachers will provide short, grade-appropriate lessons to enrich standards addressed in class. Assignments will not contain new material or subject matter. Teachers will also have virtual office hours to assist students as needed.

In the event families experience power outages or internet issues, additional time and resources to complete assignments will be provided to students upon return to campus.

“Last January, I started researching this truly innovative idea that strategically blends teaching and technology during inclement weather days,” says Amber Bunce, a Bartow County School System instructional technology specialist. “Surveys showed a favorable response from faculty, staff, and parents representing all 20 of our schools. Ninety-six percent of staff members were in favor of Digital Learning Days and 85 percent of the responses from the community agreed that this is a viable plan.”

“During the planning process, District leaders were also in communication with at least four other nearby school systems that successfully implemented this initiative,” adds Bartow County School System Superintendent Dr. Phillip Page. “We have the desire, technology, platform, and ability to apply this new procedure. School closures impact the continuity of instruction for our students and can change the school calendar. By designating Digital Learning Days, the BCSS will be able to lessen those impacts.”

Additional school and grade-level specific information on Digital Learning Days will be issued this month in messages, newsletters, and other general school communications.

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