



Weekly Asynchronous Benchmarks Proposals: Guidance for Cyber Charter Schools

Introduction and Statutory Context

Under [Section 1327.2 of the Public School Code](#), as amended by Act 47 of 2025, all Pennsylvania cyber charter schools must incorporate the following in their attendance policies:

- A policy to determine when a child has an unexcused or excused absence or is present for synchronous instruction. To be present for synchronous instruction, a child must be present and visible to the teacher on camera during each synchronous instructional period for each course.
- A policy to determine when a child has an unexcused or excused absence or is present for asynchronous instruction. To be present for asynchronous instruction, a student must complete weekly benchmarks.

The following requirements shall apply to the weekly benchmarks:

- **Submission deadline:** Cyber charter schools must establish and submit their weekly benchmarks to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) for approval by June 30 of each year for the upcoming school year.
 - **45-day review:** If the Department has not approved, denied, or returned the weekly benchmarks within 45 days of submission, the benchmarks are deemed approved for the following school year.
- **Adequate and consistent progress:** The weekly benchmarks must be sufficient to demonstrate the student is making adequate and consistent progress toward completion of each course in which the student is enrolled. The cyber charter school's attendance policy shall define adequate and consistent progress and include the consequence for failure to make adequate and consistent progress.
- **Clear consequences:** If a student does not complete the weekly benchmark, the student shall receive an absence or other consequence in accordance with the school's attendance policy for asynchronous instruction.

This guidance details what cyber charter schools must include in their proposals of weekly benchmarks for asynchronous instruction and outlines the evidence-based criteria PDE will use for evaluation.

Part I: Required Components of the Benchmark Proposal

Each school may choose the format that works best for their team to construct and submit the proposed weekly benchmarks for asynchronous instruction (i.e., Word, Power Point, PDF, etc.). To be considered complete and ready for PDE review, a cyber charter school's Weekly Asynchronous Benchmarks Proposal must contain the following components.

Section I: School Information

This section must include the following information:

- Cyber Charter School Name (as it appears in EdNA);
- Administrative Unit Number (AUN);
- Chief Administrator Name; and
- Date Submitted to PDE.

Section II: Clear Description of Asynchronous Instruction Model(s)

1. Describe the asynchronous options that will be offered at the cyber charter school in SY2026-2027:
 - a. Include information about course delivery methods, pacing expectations, instructional supports, and how students interact with teachers and course content.
 - b. If asynchronous instruction differs across grade levels or programs of study, include those details in your description.
 - c. Describe the process the cyber charter school uses to determine if a student is "asynchronous for instruction".
 - i. Is it determined at the course level or at the student level?
 - ii. Describe the process by which a student or parent/guardian secure administrator approval to participate asynchronously.
2. Provide the percentage of enrolled students participating in each of the following asynchronous status categories. For the purpose of this proposal, use the population of students who were enrolled at the end of the 2025-2026 school year to respond to this prompt.
 - a. **Fully Asynchronous** (i.e., the student is learning asynchronously **in all enrolled courses**)
 - b. **Partially Asynchronous** (i.e., the student is learning asynchronously **in 50-99% of their enrolled courses**)
 - c. **Primarily Synchronous** (i.e., the student is learning asynchronously **in less than 50% of their enrolled courses**)
 - d. **Other** (please describe)

If a student regularly participates asynchronously in at least one course, they would be considered asynchronous and weekly benchmarks would be required. If a student has the option to participate synchronously or asynchronously each day, they would be considered asynchronous for the purposes of this statutory requirement and weekly

benchmarks would be required – unless there is evidence of synchronous participation in the course every school day.

The total percentage when the percentages from each status category are added must equal 100%.

See Table 1 for a sample layout for the information requested in this section.

Table 1. Asynchronous Status Summary (based on students enrolled at the end of the 2025-2026 school year)

Asynchronous Status Category	Number of Students	Percentage of Total Enrolled Population
Fully Asynchronous (i.e., the student is learning asynchronously in all enrolled courses)		
Partially Asynchronous (i.e., the student is learning asynchronously in 50-99% of their enrolled courses)		
Primarily Synchronous (i.e., the student is learning asynchronously in less than 50% of their enrolled courses)		
Other (please describe here):		

SECTION III: Weekly Benchmark Framework

In accordance with section 1327.2, “the weekly benchmarks must be sufficient to demonstrate the student is making adequate and consistent progress toward completion **of each course in which the student is enrolled.**”

The proposed weekly benchmark framework must explicitly define what constitutes "adequate and consistent progress" toward course completion. This definition must be clear and detailed. It must outline quantitative measures showing how a student stays on pace to finish the course by the end of the term.

1. Identify the measurable indicators that will comprise the cyber charter school’s proposed weekly benchmark framework. For each indicator, include the following details:
 - a. How is the indicator measured?
 - b. How often is the indicator measured (i.e., daily, weekly, monthly)?
 - c. Where are the data for the indicator stored and for how long are these data stored (e.g., entire year, specific number of years beyond the current year, for the semester, until the course is complete)?

Examples of indicators currently used in cyber charter schools include the following (this list is neither exhaustive nor prescriptive):

- Course logins/access;
- Progress toward pacing guide (i.e., completion and submission of an assessment (e.g., quiz, unit exam) or completion and submission of an assignment);

- Interactive participation in an academic discussion board (meeting predefined rubric standards);
 - Participation in teacher conferences/check-ins;
 - Participation in synchronous support sessions associated with the course;
 - Time engaged in course activities; and
 - Communication with teacher.
2. Describe how the cyber charter school will use the indicators identified in Section III.1 to determine whether a student is present or absent each instructional day. Be as clear and specific as possible. The “formula” should be explained in a manner that is clear and explicit for students and parents/guardians.
 3. Describe how the cyber charter school will monitor weekly benchmark progress for students engaged in asynchronous instruction. Include:
 - Frequency of monitoring;
 - Staff responsible for monitoring; and
 - Student/family notification procedures.

Ensure the frequency and notification align with the requirements of [Section 1333 of the Public School Code](#) regarding procedures when a child is truant and [Section 1333.1 of the Public School Code](#) regarding procedures when a child is habitually truant.

4. Describe interventions that will be implemented when a student fails to meet weekly benchmarks. Include the timeline for notification and intervention as outlined in your attendance policy; academic, behavioral, social emotional, and other supports; and escalation process when a student consistently fails to meet the established weekly benchmarks.

Ensure your procedures and interventions align with guidance on [Responding to Unlawful Absences](#) in the [Compulsory School Attendance, Unlawful Absences, and School Attendance Improvement Conferences Basic Education Circular \(BEC\)](#).

SECTION IV: DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING

Describe how the cyber charter school will ensure weekly benchmark progress and attendance records for each student are accessible for state review, monitoring, or audit purposes during and after the school year.

SECTION V: ASSURANCES

Include the following assurances statements with an electronic signature from the Chief School Administrator.

As Chief School Administrator, I certify that:

- ✓ The submitted weekly benchmarks comply with applicable provisions of Section 1327.2 of the Public School Code, as amended by Act 47 of 2025;

- ✓ The benchmarks are sufficient to determine whether a student participating asynchronously is present or absent for each instructional day;
- ✓ The benchmarks demonstrate adequate and consistent progress toward completion of each enrolled course;
- ✓ The school's process for responding to students who continue to fail to meet the weekly benchmarks for asynchronous instruction align with Sections 1333 and 1333.1 of the Public School Code and guidance in the *Compulsory School Attendance, Unlawful Absences, and School Attendance Improvement Conferences BEC*;
- ✓ The school will maintain documentation supporting attendance determinations; and
- ✓ The school will provide PDE with timely notification of any substantive changes to the approved benchmark framework.

Part II: Department Evaluation Criteria & Evidence-Based Practices

When reviewing submissions, PDE will look for specific criteria to ensure compliance with the requirements outlined in Section 1327.2, as amended by Act 47 of 2025, and alignment with evidence-based practices in supporting positive attendance behaviors in K-12 education.

Section I: School Information

Criteria	Met
Provides all of the required demographic information about the school as it appears in EdNA.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Section II: Clear Description of Asynchronous Instruction Model(s)

Criteria	Met
Provides a comprehensive explanation of asynchronous instruction, including course structures, delivery methods, pacing expectations, and opportunities for student-teacher and student-peer interaction.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Differences across grade levels or programs of study are clearly explained.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Clearly explains how students are identified as asynchronous, including decision-making process, approval procedures, course-level/student-level distinctions, and stakeholder communication.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Includes percentages and counts for all required fields and categories total 100%.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Section III: Weekly Benchmark Framework

Quality of Benchmark Indicators

Criteria	Met
Proposed benchmark framework uses multiple indicators of engagement and progress rather than relying on a single metric.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Indicators are directly connected to academic progress rather than simple platform access.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Each indicator clearly identifies how it is measured, frequency of measurement, and data source/storage location.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Includes quantitative thresholds and timelines understandable to families and staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Proposed benchmark framework balances student flexibility with clear accountability expectations (i.e., they are rigorous but attainable).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Definition of Adequate and Consistent Progress

Criteria	Met
Provides a precise, measurable, course-based definition aligned to successful course completion and pacing expectations.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Benchmarks clearly demonstrate how weekly expectations keep students on pace for successful course completion by the end of the term.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Attendance Determinations

Criteria	Met
Proposal clearly explains how benchmark framework progress translates into daily attendance determination.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Attendance determinations are based on objective, consistently applied measures across courses and student groups.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Expectations, attendance calculations, and consequences are communicated in plain language available to students and families.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Monitoring and Student Support

Criteria	Met
Proposal describes a clear system to ensure student progress in the benchmark framework is monitored consistently and proactively with clearly defined timelines, structures, and responsibilities.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Proposal includes timely and systematic procedures for notifying students and families of benchmark framework progress, attendance concerns, and intervention needs aligned with Sections 1327.2, 1333, and 1333.1 of the Public School Code.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Proposed interventions incorporate evidence-based strategies for improving attendance and align with guidance in the <i>Compulsory School Attendance, Unlawful Absences, and School Attendance Improvement Conferences BEC</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Section IV:

Documentation and Reporting

Criteria	Met
Proposal identifies reliable systems for storing, tracking, and reporting attendance and benchmark progress data.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Section V:

Assurances

Criteria	Met
Includes all of the required assurances.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Signed by the Chief School Administrator who is identified in EdNA.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No