

What is a “Digital Learning Day”?

A digital learning day is used in place of a school day that has been cancelled due to inclement weather. A digital learning day means that students will complete learning activities and assignments provided by the teacher at home. Students will receive learning activities and assignments for each subject that would have originally taken place during a regular school day.

Why is the Springfield School District exploring and preparing for the use of “Digital Learning Day”?

Historically, winter weather in southwest Minnesota can be persistent and disruptive. Neighboring school districts have experienced a loss of an entire school week due to winter storms and their aftermath. Now, in the 2015-16 school year, it seems that with the resources available and if prepared for carefully, we can mitigate the disruptiveness our winter weather can have on student learning. The core mission for the Springfield School District is “Learning for All” and that student achievement matters. Our flexible learning year calendar and professional development activities support these ideals. In providing students and teachers more opportunities for learning and the ability to provide learning without disruption during snow days is consistent with our district’s focus on student achievement. Additionally, a digital learning day reinforces 21st century job and post-secondary educational opportunities for working and learning remotely. The viability and continuation of this type of flexible learning option as an alternative to a snow day will be reviewed.

How will we be notified that a “snow day” is a “Digital Learning Day”?

The school will communicate to all parents and staff through the Honeywell Instant Alert System that is already utilized. In the message sent it will read that this snow day is a “Digital Learning Day”?

What about 2 hour late starts and when school closes early? Will those days also be a “Digital Learning Day”?

No. In the event of two hour late starts and early dismissals, a digital learning day will not be expected. Specifically, students and staff are typically either getting to school or going home during those school hours missed and assignments and activities are not expected for either students or staff.

What about PreSchoolers and a “Digital Learning Day”?

No expectations for preschoolers to complete activities on a digital snow day. In the event of two hour late starts and early dismissals, a digital snow day will not be expected.

What happens if a student does not complete the “Digital Learning Day” assignments?

They would be expected to turn their work in on the following school day(so 1 day make-up). Students are expected to complete assigned work in a timely manner. If students don’t complete their work in a timely manner, elementary teachers will work with students to help them gain completion. A student in grades 7-12 will be placed on the I.C.U. list until the assignments are completed. Parents should contact their child’s teacher if there are extenuating circumstances that prohibit your child from completing the assignment satisfactorily.

What if a 7-12 student does not have access to a computer and/or internet to access the lesson or complete activities?

The student can obtain the assignment in a hard copy or electronic version during the next regular school day. Either way, students will have 1 day to complete the required learning activities and assignments.

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What if a student is on a pre-arranged absence?

The student would be expected to make up the learning activities and assignments just as if it were any other absence from school.

How is a student expected to complete the activities if they go to day care when there is a “Digital Learning Day”?

The school district plans on providing daycare facilities with these activities. If the student cannot access the internet or gain hard copy of the learning activities and assignments to their daycare for that day, they would have an added school day to complete them.

How much time is my student expected to take to complete the assignments?

Teachers have designed learning activities and assignments that are equivalent in time to a regularly scheduled class period. Students working independently on an assignment will likely take less time to complete the assignment compared to a large group setting. Estimated around 15-20 minutes per assignment per subject.

Will the school building be closed on an “Digital Learning Day” to students as it is on a regular snow day?

Yes. The school district buildings will be closed to students and activities on a “Digital Learning Day”.

Will staff be accessible during and “Digital Learning Day”? And if so, how?

Yes. The school district staff are expected to be contacted through their school email, which can be found on our school website or in the take home folders. Schoology may be utilized mostly by 7th-12th grade students and staff. Staff are expected to be available during school hours or 7:40 a.m. until 3:40 p.m. Staff may not respond immediately to questions, but are expected to respond in a timely manner. If students struggle with an assignment because they can't contact with a staff member due to lack of internet connectivity, they would still be allowed 1 day to make up their work.

What if there is only one computer in the house but multiple students?

Students may need to share resources in the home or other locations. Some students may want to work on offline options while others complete online assignments. 7-12 students would be expected to use the district-assigned iPad which may help alleviate the demand on the home computer. The public library is also an option for in-town students that could get their safely.

May a student access the assignments or complete the online assignments from their Smartphone?

Teacher websites can be accessed from a variety of tablets, Smart phones, laptop and desktop computers. The assignments may use a variety of websites and applications that may or may not work from a variety of devices.

Will there still be make-up dates built into the district calendar?

Yes, make-up dates will continue to be built into the district calendar. A digital learning day is an option that may be used in place of one or more cancelled school days or make-up days but may not be used for all cancelled school days in any given school year.

Other questions?

If there are other questions, please don't hesitate to ask and we can add them to the frequently asked questions list.