



# SPRINGFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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*"Learning for All"*

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The Springfield School District has had the practice of utilizing a "digital learning day" as a means of counting that day as a student day since the 2015-16 school year. Our practice has been to utilize up to 3 of these days. The school board has agreed to allow the district to utilize two more "digital learning days" to count as student instructional days.

Legislation in 2018 amended state statute to recognize that up to 5 of these "digital learning days" may count as student instructional days. Also by state statute, school districts have to have at least 165 days of instruction and a minimum of 1020 hours of instruction for grades 7-12 and 935 hours of instruction for elementary students. The Springfield school calendar includes 175 student contact days and 7 additional teacher duty days. The governor stated in January that two days due to cold weather would be waived. However, school districts have been advised that would need legislative approval and is not under the governor's unilateral authority.

Many neighboring school districts are in jeopardy of meeting the 165 days of minimum instruction and are now working in putting digital learning days into their practices. As a district, it seems that we are growing with our capacity to provide better learning experiences each year we implement "digital learning days". A premise for our school district is that it is preferred to keep learning moving forward during "snow days" vs. tacking days on at the end of the school calendar. Especially when we consider the ways students and teachers can connect via technology and/or design predetermined activities.

Conceptually, there are days where this type of learning already occurs. On days when teachers cannot be at school, they draft plans for student learning in their absence. When our children are sick, plans and activities come to them in either a take home folder or 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders can expect assignments to be communicated through Schoology. Similarly, when weather can create a separation between the student and teacher, our goal is to still facilitate learning objectives and the continuity of learning by utilizing a digital learning day. Additionally, some teachers already have students perform assignments and activities remotely.

Please don't hesitate to contact an administrator, if you have any questions or concerns. We greatly appreciate your patience as we work through a historic winter together.

Thank you,

Keith Kottke  
Superintendent  
Springfield School District