

CYBER DAYS to replace Snow Days!

Our School will no longer have “Snow Days.” They will now be “Cyber Days!” In as much as we are a one-to-one school, there is no reason why learning cannot go on when school is cancelled due to snow. Today students received the Cyber-Day Instructions that are listed below. Learning will continue and we will not have to make up days missed due to snow. We understand that electricity may be affected by a storm. If that happens, the student will be expected to make up the work when power resumes. Thank you for your support.

Cyber-Day Instructions:

The following instructions should be used when a snow-day is announced. The school will alert the student body and faculty that they are to follow cyber-day instructions.

- * All teachers are required to post a thirty minute or more assignment for each class scheduled to meet that day by 10 a.m. Teachers may post the night before, but not after 10:00 a.m. (similar to two hours late)
- * Students will be reminded to take necessary books home the night before a pending storm (whenever possible).
- * Students are required to check each teacher’s site and complete the assignments according to the directions of each assignment, deadline, and grading requirements on that day.
- * All teachers will hold students accountable with a grade for the assignment and students will receive a late grade or zero for assignments turned in late or not at all.
- * The Principal will make an announcement prior to leaving school the day before a pending storm to notify students of their responsibility and to take books home for possible home assignments.
- * The Office Secretary will add that students are to follow the “Cyber Day policy” on her school cancellation message.

If widespread power outages are reported in the news, assignments should still be completed when power is restored. A note/email from a parent to the teachers will be required for late/missing work to be accepted due to a power outage.

Why Cyber Days in place of Snow Days?

A few reasons some have shared:

- 1) The cost to learning and planned activities is huge. When a snow day comes, everything stops and all administrators, teachers, and staff begin scrambling to deal with it. Meetings are derailed, PD is thrown off, and teaching staff are left in a lurch with lessons and lost instructional time.
- 2) After a snow day, principals often times have to deal with salaried staff vs hourly paraprofessional work make-up schedules. Even with a CO procedure in place, each school has a cultural response to workdays and instructional time lost. HR calls school admins in for meetings just to sort through work schedules. It's all a big mess because circumstances are different each time.
- 3) Daily rotations are also thrown off with things like specials (PE, Music, Art, Labs, etc) and block schedules.
- 4) One big monetary negative effect of snow days (but really can't be calculated very well) is a loss of learning time in regards to standardized test prep. Our school put a lot of pressure on AP teachers to achieve certain score averages. And we did some SAT prep in classes in order to push score averages because we published all of those scores (and we were a private school competing with other schools). AP and SAT tests will happen despite how many snow days you had. State standardized tests may have a little more flexibility if the state has had a lot of snow days (I'm not sure), but from my understanding, public schools that have lower scores on those tests can lose certain funding. So beyond the monetary expenses of closing schools (from a building perspective), there's also an indirect expense of closing school on losing planned days for standardized test preparation.

Sometimes I wonder why schools just don't meet during the summer and have winter break instead of summer break (my 17-year-old self just punched me).

- 5) Most often "make-up" days occur in the spring, but when numbers become significant they are added on to the end of the year. That is a time when cooling costs can be as significant, if not more significant, than heating costs.

In my school district, we moved to a 4 day, 10 hour per day work week in the summer so that schools could be "closed down" on Friday. I was told this saved us as much as \$50,000 per week.

Per Finance Director:

Utilities: savings due to setting back temps, saving water, systems off: \$4500 per day

Bus drivers: 90 drivers at 6 hrs/day: \$5800/day

Cafeteria: 105 workers at 4-6 hrs /day: \$5500/day

Custodial work: 140 workers at 7 hrs/day: \$12,500/day

Some maintenance, support workers, school secretaries, etc. (do they get "snow day pay"? Differs by district): say \$3,000/day

Subtotal: \$31,300/day

Other costs, like teacher/administrator salaries, etc. are paid anyway by their contract. Some incidentals maybe, such as charges for building services under contract not rendered... round up to \$34,000/day. That's for us. Different size districts will vary.

Have to add back snow & ice clearance services, if any needed. That can wipe out and even exceed the cost savings for really big snows, downed trees, roof repairs, spreading salt, etc.