



**Prospect Heights School District 23
Board Memorandum
Information Item**

Date: March 11, 2020

Subject: Prospect Heights District 23 Distance Learning Plan

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Abstract:

This memo contains the steps to enact a distance learning plan in Prospect Heights District 23; a historical context for implementing Distance Learning days in District 23; the eLearning plan for consideration; the general structure for implementation; general education expectations; and special education/related services expectations, classified expectations.

Required Elements:

The regional office of education or intermediate service center for the school district must timely verify that a proposal for an e-learning program has met the requirements specified in this Section and that the proposal contains provisions designed to reasonably and practicably accomplish the following:

- (1) to ensure and verify at least 5 clock hours of instruction or school work, as required under Section 10-19.05, for each student participating in an e-learning day;
- (2) to ensure access from home or other appropriate remote facility for all students participating, including computers, the Internet, and other forms of electronic communication that must be utilized in the proposed program;
- (2.5) to ensure that non-electronic materials are made available to students participating in the program who do not have access to the required technology or to participating teachers or students who are prevented from accessing the required technology;
- (3) to ensure appropriate learning opportunities for students with special needs;
- (4) to monitor and verify each student's electronic participation;
- (5) to address the extent to which student participation is within the student's control as to the time, pace, and means of learning;
- (6) to provide effective notice to students and their parents or guardians of the use of particular days for e-learning;
- (7) to provide staff and students with adequate training for e-learning days' participation;
- (8) to ensure an opportunity for any collective bargaining negotiations with representatives of the school district's employees that would be legally required, including all classifications of school district employees who are represented by collective bargaining agreements and who would be affected in the event of an e-learning day;
- (9) to review and revise the program as implemented to address difficulties confronted;

Modified Emergency Steps to Enact Emergency eLearning Plan Being Proposed by ISBE:

- Allows district Superintendent to adopt the plan without board approval,
- Removes school board requirement to hold public hearing,
- Allows districts to use e-learning days for the duration of the state emergency declaration,

- Removes Sept. 1 plan approval deadline
- Removes 30-day protocol notification requirement.

Required Steps to Enact the D23 Distance Learning Plan:

- March 10, 2020 - Meeting with the PHEA to discuss the Distance Learning plans.
- March 11, 2020 - Meeting with Leadership team which includes principals to discuss Distance Learning.
- March 11, 2020 - BoE discussion on eLearning & Distance Learning

Historical context:

Four years ago, the State of Illinois allowed three districts to pilot eLearning days as a trial for potential expansion throughout the state. Then, in November 2018 the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) issued a letter with new guidelines regarding the school day. The outcome of the letter allowed districts to begin using eLearning because the districts were able to define learning and the school day unilaterally. Recently the challenge by the Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT) and Illinois Education Association (IEA) was successful in re-legislating the 5 hour school day, but the caveat is that districts will be able to utilize distance and eLearning for the purposes of emergency days.

Current context:

With the rapidly growing concerns related to the COVID-19 virus, the Illinois State Board of Education has directed Districts to prepare for school closures, including the preparation of an eLearning or Distance Learning plan. They are currently in discussions with legislators to modify the statute to allow for these plans to be implemented without the existing requirements.

District 23 is moving forward with a plan to have the option to implement eLearning in the 2019-2020 school year due to the COVID-19 concerns. The Prospect Heights School District will maintain the option to make up inclement weather/emergency days at the end of the year, and/or implement an eLearning day to make up the attendance day.

Board Policy 4:180 Pandemic Preparedness, provides the framework for the collaborative process that we have been using, as well as the reliance on our network of local and state officials. In recent meetings, planning has begun for preventative and proactive measures, as well as preparations for confirmed cases in our schools and community.

The eLearning Plan below outlines the manner in which administration will address the ISBE requirements, which are outlined in the attached eLearning [Program Verification Form](#) (PVF). The PVF is a stock form from ISBE and the North Cook Intermediate Service Center (NCISC).

Work to develop a more collaboratively constructed and comprehensive plan is underway and will continue over the next year. Based upon the modifications to the legislation, our plan can be modified to better meet the needs of our students and staff.

Prospect Heights District 23 Distance LEARNING PLAN 2019-2020

Introduction:

Public Act 101-0012 of the 101st Illinois General Assembly permits local school districts to establish an e-learning plan to address student learning in a remote environment. Since 4th through 8th grade students in District 23 are issued a district managed iPad, this enables our teachers to take educational experiences beyond the walls of the classroom and comply with the statutory requirements. Students in grades Pre-k through 3 will also be offered educational experiences online as well as “offline”.

Due to the recent state legislation and our current technology infrastructure, District 23 can meet the statutory stipulations to use e-learning/distance learning days in a manner that permits students to use tools to access learning opportunities from remote locations. The approval of eLearning and the eLearning Verification Form allows District 23 to move forward with the overarching plan for distance learning for emergency days.

Teaching & Learning and Curricular Connections

Student learning activities will be tied to the existing curriculum of District 23 schools which are aligned to the Illinois Learning Standards. Learning objectives align to the content and skills students must master to be successful learners. Teachers will collaborate on their course and grade level teams to develop rigorous activities in line with the standards. Suggested activities will align with a student’s current instructional program (i.e. reading, math, content, health, fine-arts, PE). Learning activities will be varied, balanced, and meet the hourly requirements of the eLearning plan.

Student & Staff Access and Connectivity

Student learning will be implemented utilizing the district approved Learning Management System, Schoology, See-Saw, and Google Classroom can be completed on any device, including the district issued iPad. Teachers will be available to interact with their students digitally during contract time on the Distance Learning Day, and students may also have the opportunity to engage with their peers via digital tools.

Staff required to interact with students during the contractual hours all have district-issued devices to support student learning on these days.

Student Attendance

Student attendance and monitoring will take place through the Power School portal along with the Learning Management Systems of Schoology, See-Saw and Google Classroom, and will be based on work or learning activities performed on these days.

IEP and EL Students

Students will be afforded all reasonable accommodations and modifications outlined in their IEP, 504, and/or support plan(s). Teachers and aides will be available during the hours of instruction to provide additional assistance to students.

Students with other needs will have minutes made up over the course of the school year.

Notice to Bargaining Units

Discussions with the Prospect Heights Education Association (PHEA) began in March of 2020. Formal conversations with all staff will also be made in March of 2020.

Staff Training

Staff will be trained on attendance procedures, expected roles, and lesson development. Staff receive regular training on district issued technology and currently use it to drive instruction. Technology Integration Specialists, building administrators, district administrators, and technology support staff will be available to train and support staff in the implementation of eLearning days.