

City of St. Charles School District
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SCSD Families,

At yesterday evening's Board of Education meeting, the Board approved a new snow day protocol for the City of St. Charles School District. The new protocol will allow all of our students to participate in virtual learning days when inclement weather prevents us from holding in-person schooling.

The Alternative Methods of Instruction (AMI) "virtual learning snow days" will allow all students to participate in Zoom calls and Google Classroom content. These virtual learning snow days will consist of 6.5 hours of instructional time. Please note that this does not mean 6.5 hours of screen time with the student's teacher(s), but rather 6.5 hours of meaningful work accomplished through a combination of live and recorded lessons, online activities, and traditional independent work (ie reading, homework, projects, etc.). The new protocol allows for the District to call up to 5 virtual learning snow days in an effort to help prevent the current school year from dragging into June due to possible snow days.

Virtual learning snow days will be called in advance to inclement weather. This means that if a winter weather storm is expected to prevent the District from holding in-person learning, we will call for a virtual learning snow day as a substitute for a traditional snow day. Calling virtual learning snow days in advance will allow our students to take home the necessary technology (ie. Chromebook, hotspots, etc.) to facilitate these days and help our teachers prepare for them. However, there may be times when a storm cannot be predicted or a virtual learning snow day was not called for in advance. Should that happen, the District will call for a traditional snow day where no learning, in-person or virtual, will take place.

If there is either a virtual learning snow day or a traditional snow day, students, parents and the community will be notified as they have been in the past. This means the District will send out phone calls, emails, social media updates, website alerts, and mobile app notifications to inform the public as to what type of snow day is being called. Please keep in mind that while we will be notifying local media outlets (TV and radio stations, newspaper), these outlets aren't equipped to allow us to differentiate between specific types of snow days. So, while these outlets can be used to see if the District has called a snow day, please seek out one of the aforementioned District outlets of communication to see if it is a virtual learning snow day or traditional snow day.

More information about the virtual learning snow day learning process will come from your child's school and teacher(s) soon. While this new protocol is a change, we feel it's the best way to capture some learning, keep everyone safe, and try not to extend into June this school year.

One more important note...As I stated last night during the BOE meeting, we were just made aware of new state guidance that would eliminate the need to contact trace or quarantine

students and staff when we have a positive case and all parties were wearing masks. We are working with the St. Charles County Department of Health to review our District's procedures in light of this new information. We will send out communication/directions to staff and families early next week. Until then, we are following the processes already established. This means any students or staff currently on quarantine should remain in quarantine until they receive additional communication from the District.

Also, we are preparing for a possible strategic move to switching our two high schools to full virtual learning for the 3 + weeks between Thanksgiving and winter break. Please note that these changes are aimed at providing substitutes at the lower grade levels where in-person learning is most critical as an attempt to keep all other schools open and not being made because schools are hitting the 5% threshold that we have stated could trigger virtual learning. We will continue to monitor cases and maneuver as needed for individual buildings, grade-spans, and/or the District if percentages continue to rise. This is NOT official, but we want you to have a good idea of where we think we're headed after Thanksgiving break if our numbers don't improve or our protocols don't change. If this is needed, we will communicate the details early next week.

As always, thank you for your continued support.

United Together,
Dr. Jason Sefrit
Superintendent of Schools