

## **POTTSTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT**

### **Flexible Instructional Day (FID) Q & A**

#### **What is a Flexible Instructional Day (FID)?**

A FID is used in place of a school day that has been cancelled due to inclement weather or other emergency situations. On a 'FID', students will complete learning activities and assignments provided by their teachers at home on the day that otherwise would have been cancelled. THIS IS A SYNCHRONOUS VIRTUAL LEARNING DAY. Students will receive learning activities and assignments for each subject that would have originally taken place during a regular school day. FID's will not be made up like a traditional cancellation day. The PA Department of Education (PDE) has approved the District's application to use up to five Flexible Instructional Days per year for the Pottstown School District

#### **How will parents and students find the FID learning activities and assignments?**

In the event the district would need to utilize a Flexible Instructional Day, all Pottstown School District students, parents, and staff members will receive notice about the Flexible Instructional Day. This message will be sent using our global connect system for phone calls, texts, and emails housed in our system. Additionally, we will use social media platforms to direct families to our district website which will have all of the specific information needed about Flexible Instructional Days.

Students in grades K-12 have chrome books and Google Classroom accounts. They will receive messages sent from their instructors through google classroom with instructions about the Flexible Instructional Day, how to log student attendance, how to access the instructional materials, and instructions for families in need of accommodations including technological accommodations for the day.

Finally, we will notify the public through our local media outlets (WFMZ, KYW, etc.) that a Flexible Instructional Day has been initiated (*Please note, in the past, some media outlets refuse to display this specific information so it is best to check the website.*) Our local media outlets traditionally report this information on their morning broadcast as well as on their websites and mobile applications.

#### **How did the Pottstown School District explore and prepare for the use of a Flexible Instruction Day?**

In 2021, The PA Department of Education (PDE) provided school districts with an opportunity to apply for the use of Flexible Instructional Days when schools are cancelled due to inclement weather or other emergency situations. The PDE required schools to file an application, develop model lesson plans and address various criteria. In July 2021, the PDE approved PSD the use of up to 5 FIDS days per school year. The PDE has approved the Pottstown School District's

Flexible Instructional Day Plan for the next three years. The FID program will be implemented beginning this school year, 2021-2022.

### **How will inclement weather (“snow”) days work for 2021-22?**

For up to 5 of the school closures due to inclement weather or emergency situations, the Pottstown School District may call a Flexible Instructional Day (FID). Should additional days be needed, these will become our traditional makeup days. Again, FID’s will not be made up like a traditional cancellation day.

### **What is expected of students?**

At the start of the year, students will receive an FID packet. Included in the packet will be a copy of their schedule, staff directory list, information on how to access counseling and health services, and the contact information for the IT Help Desk. In addition, directions on how to locate and access public Wi-Fi would be included in the packet for families with no access to the internet.

Once notified that the Flexible Instructional Day has been initiated, students will be required to access their Google Classroom or go through the website:

1. THIS IS A SYNCHRONOUS VIRTUAL LEARNING DAY.
2. Students will need to enter into the site to gain access to the activities.
3. Once the student logs in and has access to the google classroom platform, they will choose their course as outlined in their schedule.

On the Flexible Instructional Day, students will use their devices to enter their course on google classroom, and answer the attendance question. Students who do not have access to the internet to answer the attendance question online can call their teacher directly or call into the IT Help Desk number to report attendance.

Upon admission into the course, students will have hard copies of their instructional materials and they would be able to access their instructional materials via Google Classroom. Students would actively participate in the lesson, reach out to staff for additional support, and complete tasks as assigned. Students who are unable to interact in the classroom instruction via google meet, due to lack of internet access, can contact the teacher and be provided with the phone number allocated to the zoom or google meeting and the PIN code so that they can call and listen in to the instruction. Assignments can be submitted virtually or handed in to the teacher on the next school day. Students will be credited for “attending” the Flexible Instructional Day once they answer the attendance question or call in their attendance and complete and turn in the materials required either on-line or through hard copy. The expectation is for students to complete the assignments on the Flexible Instructional Day, however, students will have up to two (2) days upon returning to school to hand in the completed FID assignments for full credit.

## **What is expected of teachers?**

The Flexible Instructional Day is a workday for teachers. When the district is notified of impending inclement weather the superintendent will notify staff to implement the contingency plan. That plan consists of staff providing students with instructional material needed for the FID.

During an FID, teachers will log in remotely to the Google Platform from any site with internet access, including their home. Teachers and support staff are expected to follow their normal classroom schedules, providing live, synchronous instruction and assignments. Teachers and support staff shall be available for support through their email, Google Classroom, Google Meet (if needed), and by phone to answer any and all questions students or parents may have. After assignments are completed, teachers are to grade the assignment and place a grade in their gradebook. Paraprofessionals will work directly with their assigned students to provide support using multiple communication sources.

Teachers and support staff daily hours will remain the same during the Flexible Instructional Day.

High School - 7:20am - 2:50pm

Middle School - 7:10am - 2:40pm

Elementary School - 7:55am - 3:25pm

Administrators, Nurses, related services providers, counselors and social workers will have the same hours of availability as it relates to their respective buildings. They are accessible via phone, email, or zoom/google meet to provide adequate support for students.

## **How does student attendance work?**

Students will be credited for "attending" the Flexible Instructional Day once they answer the attendance question or call in their attendance and complete and turn in the materials required either on-line or through hard copy. The expectation is for students to complete the assignments on the Flexible Instructional Day, however, students will have up to two (2) days upon returning to school to hand in the completed FID assignments for full credit. Attendance will be taken during homeroom, and later confirmed in different classes if the student schedule has more than one teacher.

## **What happens if a student does not complete the FID assignments?**

The student will lose the point value or grade for the assignment. This loss of points could negatively impact a student's marking period grade. Each teacher weights learning activities and

assignments differently. It would be in the best interest of the student to complete the assignments on the FID.

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

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

### **What's the benefit of a FID?**

District students will not be required to make up additional school days - or to extend the school year to make up for inclement weather or emergency cancellations. FIDs are deemed a school day and count toward the number of instructional days/hours required under Article 15 of the Public School Code and Chapter 11 of the state Board of Education regulations.

### **What if I have a student with special needs?**

The FID lesson will be designed for students with special needs utilizing their program modifications, specially designed instruction and supplementary aids and services identified in their individualized education plans. Upon return from a FID, teachers of students with special needs will meet with their students to review work submitted, checking for completion and understanding. If needed, students will have additional school days to complete assignments. Any related services (PT, OT, Speech, etc...) scheduled during the FID will be rescheduled according to the frequency requirements of the students' individualized education plan

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

Google Classroom 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 a parent need to send a note after a FID if they normally have internet but it was out due to weather or an emergency situation?**

No. When the district is notified of impending inclement weather the superintendent will notify staff to implement the contingency plan. That plan consists of staff providing students with instructional material needed for the FID. The material will align directly with the current curriculum being taught in the classroom. In the event that a student does not have access to the internet during an FID, they will be able to access the phone number to the IT help desk for hotspot resources or access to alternative supports. The student would also be able to contact the teacher and be provided with the phone number allocated to the zoom or google meeting and the PIN code so that they can call and listen in to the instruction. Teachers, classroom

assistants, and administrators would be available to assist students by phone if internet access is not available and students have questions regarding the instructional material covered.

**Where can I get more information about FIDs?**

For more information about FIDs, please visit the [PA Department of Education Website](#).