

North Schuylkill School District
Flexible Instructional Day (FID)



A Flexible Instructional Day (FID) is a tool available to public school entities to be used as an alternate approach to delivering instruction if a circumstance arises that prevents instruction in customary manner. With the passage of Act 64 of 2019, section 1506 was added to the Public School Code. Public school entities now have the opportunity to develop a Flexible Instructional Day Program, enabling the public school entities to meet the 180 instructional day requirement of section 1501. The FID program may be online, offline, or a combination of the two.

FIDs are intended to support public school entities in cases when circumstances (i.e. a disease epidemic, a hazardous weather condition, a law enforcement emergency, the inoperability of school buses or other equipment necessary to the public school entity's operation, damage to a school building, or a temporary circumstance rendering any portion of a school building unfit or unsafe for use) prevent the delivery of instruction in its customary manner or location.

In order to implement a FID program, it must be approved by the local School Board of Directors prior to acceptance by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). The North Schuylkill School District Board of Education approved the District's FID plan on June 17, 2020. The District will receive notification from PDE that its application has been accepted during the fall of 2020. The Pennsylvania Department of Education has given the District permission to operate a FID program for the next three years, through the 2021-2022 school year.

Frequently Asked Questions

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. Students will only complete assignments for the classes they would have scheduled that school day. Co-curricular classes at NSE will follow a predesigned schedule. The assignments may include enrichment activities, extensions to the current lesson, or a preview of concepts and skills in an upcoming lesson. All assignments must be aligned to the District's curriculum and be planned to allow students to complete it independently.

How will parents and students learn a FID is in effect?

North Schuylkill School District will conduct an informational session on the Flexible Instruction Day (FID) implementation prior to the start of the 2020-2021 school year during meet the teacher nights and school orientations. This will occur during the week of August 17, 2020.

North Schuylkill School District uses a mass notification platform (ZippSlip) to inform students, parents, and professional & support staff when school is being cancelled because of an emergency condition. When school must be cancelled, mass notification typically occurs no later than 6:30 a.m. In addition to using ZippSlip,

cancellation announcements are also sent to television and radio stations and posted on the District website and social media accounts. The District will use the same platforms to announce when a Flexible Instructional Day is being instituted. While we anticipate the radio and television stations will simply reference the school day closing as "FID" day, this will be clearly stated and explained on any school closing announcement via ZippSlip messaging and the District website and social media accounts.

There will be two ZippSlip messages sent the day of no school. The first from the District stating school is closed and it will be a FID. The second will come from the student's homeroom teacher stating what the learning assignments will be for the day. There will also be specific information for each FID posted in the student's Google Classroom Account.

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

Students will only complete assignments for the classes they would have scheduled for that school day(s) via Google Classroom.

Students who lack internet access at home will be provided with an offline version (paper packets) of learning activities and assignments prior to the FID. Students will have three calendar days to complete the learning activities and assignments. Students who require direct or additional specially designed instruction to access or complete assignments will be provided with the support within the three days of returning to school.

A packet of papers will be sent home to be used as a reserve in case there is an unexpected day off that will be used as a FID. When the possibility of a day off is seen in advance, children's books and materials will be sent home the day before. All subjects such as ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, etc. that are covered in their regular instructional day will have materials that need to be completed and turned in within three days.

This material will be graded and points will be added to the gradebook. Title I will send home packets with the children they work with. There will also be a co-curricular component for each elementary grade level for each FID. Junior/Senior High School Students will follow their daily schedules.

1st FID: Art – K-6th

2nd FID: Computers – K-6th

3rd FID: Library – K-6th

4th FID: Music – K-6th

5th FID: Physical Education – K-6th

In the event of a planned prolonged closure, the North Schuylkill School District will increase the access for learning and have equitable virtual learning for all students. We will distribute Chromebooks and hot spots for families in need.

How did the North Schuylkill School District explore and prepare for the use of a Flexible Instructional Day?

In March 2020, the Governor of PA closed schools due to COVID-19. During the creation and implementation of the Continuity of Education Plan, our District felt confident incorporating technology to receive and submit assignments and to collaborate and communicate beyond the classroom walls. District officials discussed applying to be a FID school after observing the successfulness of our Instructional Plan.

Will there still be make-up dates built into the District calendar?

Yes, make-up dates will continue to be built into the District calendar. The PA Department of Education (PDE) has approved North Schuylkill School District's application to use up to five Flexible Instructional Days per year. Should additional days be needed, these will be added to the end of the regular school calendar.

How will the FID Program benefit students?

The FID Program provides students an opportunity to experience fulfilling responsibilities and obligations in a remote or online environment.

The FID program will also offer logistical benefits. The past few years our school year has been extended due to weather-related school closures. The Flexible Instructional Days will increase the likelihood of ending the school year on or closer to the planned date. This will help employers and students and staff who have summer jobs to better plan work schedules. The same is true for family and friends who travel long distances or who must request a day off in order to attend our commencement or other end-of-the-year school activities.

How will attendance be taken on a Flexible Instructional Day?

All students must log on to the using their Google Classroom account and complete the FID Attendance Form that will be dated and timestamped. A link to the Attendance Form will be posted the morning of each FID and will expire at 11:59 PM that evening.

In the event you do not have internet access, attendance must be telephoned to the student's homeroom teacher. Please follow this script in reporting your attendance. This is (state your first and last name). I am a student in grade (state the grade you are in). I am calling in to report my attendance for the Flexible Instructional Day of (state the date). Parents calling in on behalf of their children should adapt the script so it applies to a parent calling in. Parents with children in multiple schools must report their child's attendance to the homeroom teacher of each child. The telephone numbers to report attendance are: North Schuylkill Elementary – (570) 875-3611 and the Jr./Sr. High School – (570) 874-0495. Please use the correct extension for your homeroom teacher(s).

In the event internet or telephone service is not available during a Flexible Instructional Day, parents are required to send a note in to their child's school the next school day explaining what their child did to complete the FID requirements. This step must be completed in order for the child to receive credit for school attendance.

If a child is sick on a FID, parents must send an excuse note to their child's school just as they would on a regular school day. FIDs will count toward truancy proceedings. If attendance is not recorded by one of the above means, the student will be marked with an unexcused absence.

If 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.

All assignments will be graded and a student will also be assessed based on engagement during the FID. Levels of engagement can be calculated into the final grade. We know there may be many reasons why a student's engagement may be affected, and we will do everything we can to support them. Levels of engagement are listed below:

- Highly Engaged – means a student is actively participating by attending sessions, completing work/tasks, and is proactively communicating with the teacher and classmates.
- Engaged – means a student is meeting minimum expectations and/or is partially engaged, attends some learning sessions, and completes some work/tasks.
- Not Yet Engaged – means a student is not engaged in the learning process, does not attend learning sessions, and does not complete tasks/work.

What is expected of students on a FID?

Students are expected to log on to their teachers' Google Classroom to access their assignment information. If a child does not have internet access or equipment, the child will have three days to make up the assignment and turn it in for full credit. In the event of an extended closure, the District will provide the student with paper packets for each lesson. Students must be aware of individual teacher policies regarding incomplete and failed assignments. Students must also report any extenuating circumstances that may prevent them from completing the FID assignment within the required time.

Students are expected to complete all FID assignments during the FID. Assignments may be submitted electronically or turned in per the directions of each teacher. Students who are ill during a FID or who cannot access or complete the assignment due to a power outage, internet outage and/or similar problems that may occur have three school days following the FID to submit FID assignments.

Students can contact their teachers from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. to ask any questions through Google Classroom (virtual office), email or calling their teacher's classroom school phone and leave a voice message. Teachers will monitor Google Classroom and check their email and voice messages throughout the day.

Actively engage in Flexible learning by:

- Monitoring Google Classroom daily or work on packet daily
- Establishing daily routines for engaging in the learning experiences
- Being responsible for independent learning and maintaining a positive growth mindset
- Engaging in all learning with academic honesty
- Being an advocate and communicating with your teachers if you require additional support
- Complying with School Internet Safety Policies including expectations for online etiquette

What if I have a student with an IEP?

Special and regular education teachers will work together to design lessons that incorporate any modifications, specially designed instruction, and paraprofessionals and services identified in student's IEP, GIEP, and/or 504 Plan. Any related services (PT, OT, Speech, etc.) scheduled during the FID will be rescheduled in make-up sessions according to the frequency requirements of the students' plan. Student's roster teacher will discuss FIDs at the students' annual IEP, GIEP and/or 504 meeting where the team will consider if your child needs additional support due to the nature of a FID and will include those additional supports in the IEP, GIEP and/or 504 Plan. If an IEP, GIEP and/or 504 team determines that a student cannot receive appropriate education on a FID day or if the related services cannot be made up in a reasonable time frame, the student will be provided compensatory education in conjunction with Extended School Year Services.

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 weighs learning activities and assignments differently.

How is a student expected to complete the activities if they go to day care when school is cancelled?

If the student cannot access the internet or take a paper-copy of the learning activities and assignments to the day care to complete that day, the student would have three days to complete the activities.

How much time is my student expected to take to complete the assignments?

Teachers have designed learning activities and assignments that are equivalent to time spent on a similar activity on a regularly scheduled class period. Students working independently on an assignment will likely take less time to complete the assignment compared to a large group setting. Teachers will make every effort to assign an approximate time to each activity or assignment.

What if there is only one computer in the house but multiple students?

Students may need to share resources in the home or other locations. Some students may want to work on offline options while others complete online assignments. All students have the ability to request an offline version of the learning activities and assignments prior to the scheduled FID or on the first day after students return to school.

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

Teachers' Google Classrooms can be accessed from a variety of tablets, smartphones, laptops and desktop computers. The assignments may use a variety of websites and applications that may or may not work from a variety of devices.

Please contact the Superintendent or Building Principal with any question(s) not answered by this FAQ.