



Community Unit School District 303

Date: August 2021

To: Patricia DaSanto, Regional Superintendent Kane County Regional Office of Education

From: Dr. Jason Pearson, Superintendent, St. Charles Community Unit School District 303

Re: e-Learning Plan

This memo details the steps for enacting an e-learning plan in Community Unit School District 303 (District 303), a historical context for implementing e-learning days in District 303, the e-learning plan for consideration, the general structure for implementation, general education expectations, and special education/related services expectations, and staff expectations.

Required Steps to Enact District 303 e-Learning Plan:

- *October 1, 2021*-Publication of general circulation in the school district at least 10 days prior to hearing.
- *August 25, 2021*-Written or electronic notice designed to reach the parents or guardians of all students enrolled in the district.
- *August 25, 2021*-Written or electronic notice designed to reach any exclusive bargaining representatives of school district employees and all those employees not in a collective bargaining unit.
- *October 12, 2021*-The school board's approval of a district's initial e-learning program and renewal of the e-learning program shall be for a term of 3 years.

Historical Context

In 2015, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) approved three districts to pilot e-learning days as a trial for potential expansion throughout the state. Then, in November 2018, ISBE issued a letter with new guidelines regarding the school day. The outcome of the letter allowed districts to begin using e-learning 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 legislating the 5 hour school day, but the caveat is that districts will be able to utilize e-learning for the purposes of emergency days.

In May of 2019, the State Board of Education further refined the guidelines for emergency days

indicating that they need to be made up on the day of the weather/emergency event. While the District 303 leadership considered three different options for making up emergency days, the guidance from the State Board of Education makes the choice to exercise makeup days on the date of the event or at the end of the year the only option to exercise.

At this time, District 303 is proposing the below e-learning plan that, when approved, will be implemented when deemed necessary. District 303 will maintain the option to make up inclement weather/emergency days at the end of the year, and/or implement an e-learning day to make up the attendance day.

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) requires districts to approve an e-learning plan per the statute set forth in Public Act 101-0012 of the 101st Illinois General Assembly. In order to move forward with an e-learning plan for emergency days, District 303 must approve a plan for e-learning days and submit the plan to the Kane County Regional Office of Education for approval.

The adoption of an e-learning plan permits District 303 to use e-learning days for up to 3 years and is a necessary step to implementing the formal plan for e-learning on emergency days. Currently, there is no plan to utilize e-learning days for any days other than emergency days. If this was ever considered for anything other than emergency circumstances, it would go through the normal calendar adoption procedures in the district and with the school board.

The e-learning plan below outlines the manner in which District 303 leadership will address the ISBE requirements, which are outlined in the attached [e-learning Program Verification Form \(PVE\)](#). The PVE is a stock form from ISBE. Approving this form permits District 303 schools to move forward with the e-learning Resolution for Emergency Days.

Request

The request is that the Kane County Regional Office of Education and ISBE approve the e-learning Verification Form to move the District 303 e-learning plan for emergency days forward.

District 303 e-Learning Plan, 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024

Rationale

The rationale for this request is that it will provide District 303 schools further flexibility in the learning environment and it will further streamline the school year without adding emergency days to the end of the year.

Recommendation

The recommendation is that the Kane County Regional Office of Education approve the e-learning Plan for a period of up to three years.

Introduction

[Illinois School Code \[105 ILCS 5/10-20.56\]](#) authorized a pilot program for the use of e-learning days by three school districts to provide instruction while the students were not in attendance at the school to which they were assigned. [Public Act 101-0012](#) amends the Act by enabling all school districts to take advantage of e-Learning. Due to this amendment and our current technology infrastructure, District 303 can meet the statutory stipulations to use e-learning days in a manner that permits students to use digital tools to access learning opportunities from remote locations. The approval of the e-learning plan allows District 303 to move forward with the e-learning plan for emergency days.

Instruction, Learning, and Curricular Connections: Student learning activities and tasks will be aligned to the existing curriculum of District 303. Learning targets will align with the standards and skills of School Board approved curricula. Teachers will collaborate on their course and grade-level teams to develop activities/tasks aligned with the curriculum and current instructional unit. Suggested activities include formative assessment, student collaboration, and/or activities that provide an extension of learning. It is the expectation that the e-learning activities will total five hours of both synchronous and asynchronous activities.

Student & Staff Access and Connectivity: Student learning will be implemented utilizing a District-supported Learning Management System (LMS). During the 2021-2022 school year, the District supported platforms are Seesaw (at the elementary level), Google Classroom, and Schoology. After July 2022, the Learning Management System for all grades will be Schoology. All student learning can be completed on any device, including a district-issued Chromebook, iPad, or a home device. Learning experiences may be non-digital in nature if that makes educational sense for the unit and/or grade-level. Teachers will be available to interact with their students digitally during contractual time on the e-learning day, and students may also have the opportunity to engage with their peers via digital tools.

Student Attendance: Student attendance will be taken on e-learning days via the district's student information system.

EL Students: E-learning will be afforded to students with a focus on their identified needs. Many of the digital resources used to support instruction address the four domains of English language development: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. They additionally include built-in accessibility features such as options to translate into a variety of languages or to have texts read-aloud to students. Materials will be provided in Spanish to students in the bilingual program in accordance with the district's language and content allocation.

Students with IEP and 504 Plans: Students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP's), are supported during e-learning through their Individual Remote Learning Plan (I-RLP). I-RLP's are updated at each student's Annual Review. I-RLP's outline the continued support and services associated with a student's IEP provided in the event of an e-learning day. Accommodations outlined through a student's 504 Plan are made aware to all staff each school year and provided to students during e-learning days as appropriate (ex. seating preferences accommodations only appropriate during in person instruction).

Notice to Bargainings Unit: In August 2019, the District communicated the decision to forego e-Learning to the St. Charles Education Association (SCEA), St. Charles Educational Support Professionals (SCESP), and St. Charles Transportation & Maintenance (SCT&M). In March 2020, the e-learning plan was drafted together. In March 2021, the current e-Learning plan was revised and brought forward to the SCEA and SCESP.

Staff Professional Learning: Professional learning on technology use occurs throughout the year for all staff in District 303. Similarly, the staff understands how to use age-appropriate digital resources for student work and collaboration. As all staff have a role in supporting each other, staff within various roles such as Technology Integration Specialists, Instructional Support Coaches, Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSAs), interventionists, LRC Directors/Media Specialists (Librarians), Reading and Math Specialists, Team Leaders, Lead Teachers, and district technology support will be available to support staff in the implementation of e-learning and on e-learning days.

Benefits of using e-Learning in place of Emergency Days:

- Provides uninterrupted learning for our students.
- Supports educators with families while maintaining the long-term fidelity of course/class scope and sequence, in that educators will have a reasonable amount of time to post assignments and are not expected to be available at all times, yet they can still provide meaningful educational experiences.
- Allows for the end of the school year to be predictable and constant as it reduces or eliminates the use of emergency days.
- As structured, it allows educators to advance learning more effectively, given the ability to plan within the normal school year.
- Promotes flexible learning and operations in the digital age.
- Promotes learning beyond the school walls.

e-Learning Structures & Rationale:

There are a number of different ways to implement e-learning within a school district. The proposal for District 303 seeks to offer a meaningful learning experience for all students that advances learning within each class/course. Students in the Early Childhood Program and Kindergarten will participate in e-learning, with information being shared to parents via the District approved LMS and/or email, and if needed, students may receive printed materials. The e-learning day shall take place on the day an emergency day would otherwise have been used.

The procedure for using an e-learning day in place of an emergency day will be to alert parents, students and staff that the emergency day is commencing and that assignments and/or activities will be posted by no later than 9:00 a.m. This will allow parents, students, and educators to make e-learning plans that advance their classes/courses. It allows for the process of developing and implementing lessons for the day to be collaborative, via educator devices, so that students have a higher degree of continuity.

It is important to note that attendance on the e-learning day will be taken and that students will be expected to complete the assigned work. Student attendance on the e-learning day will count as a regular attendance day for all students.

Proposed e-Learning structures for General Education, Special Education/Related Services personnel, and classified personnel:

General Educator Expectations

Purpose: To define the expectations of an e-learning day for general education teachers so that they can adequately plan and implement lesson plans that align with the District 303 curricula.

Definition: If the e-learning option is exercised, the e-learning day shall be used in place of an emergency day on the date of the emergency event.

Communication:

- It is expected that educators are notified of the emergency day per the usual District 303 communication protocols.
- Educators will post their learning experiences by no later than 9:00 a.m. on the e-learning day.

Learning Experiences

Expectations: Learning target(s) and experiences are posted by 9:00 a.m. on the e-learning day.

- Certified staff will respond to students in a timely manner during the normal work hours on the actual e-learning day.
- Students shall have a reasonable amount of time to complete the learning experiences.

Expectations by level of instruction:

- Grades 6-12: Every class shall have a reasonable plan posted. Class activities should be approximately 40-45 minutes in length per class period.
- Elementary: Learning experiences from 2 core subject areas shall be developed and each special should post an experience from which the students can choose.
- Must be authentic, meaningful learning directly connected to the curriculum.
- Must have the ability to demonstrate or provide evidence that learning occurred.
- A product is not required for evidence of learning to occur, nor for attendance purposes.

District Responsibilities:

1. If the e-learning day option is exercised, it is the District's responsibility to make sure the students and parents can access the e-learning activities/assignments and understand the expectations on a date prior to the actual e-learning day.
2. If a student is needing technical assistance, the family will be directed to IT support.
 - a. Dedicated Help Desk phone number
 - b. Online support channel

3. It is also the District's responsibility to ensure that students have the relevant assistive technology available when an e-learning day is implemented.

Special Educator Expectations

General IEP Procedures:

The IEP team will create an I-RLP at the Annual Review outlining supports and services provided during e-learning days to ensure access to an individual student's Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The I-RLP will be connected to a student's most recent IEP and will be accessed through the District's electronic storage and IEP creation system (currently Embrace and laserfiche).

Special Education Teacher/Student Services Staff Responsibilities:

A teacher should create activities/assignments with individual students in mind. These activities/assignments may include PDFs, podcasts, presentations, multimedia, Google Docs, and any combination of the above. The I-RLP created collaboratively by the IEP team will direct the services and supports provided during e-learning days.

Related Service Responsibilities:

Related Service staff provide support and services as outlined in the students I-RLP. As this process is completed through the IEP team, which includes the parent/guardian, there may be plans for the parents to implement some of the services at home under the guidance of the related service provider.

Non-Certified Staff Expectations

Purpose: To define the expectations of an e-learning day for non-certified personnel so that they can adequately plan and make proper use of their work time and professional development within the District 303 framework.

Definition: If the e-learning option is exercised, the e-learning day shall occur on the date of the emergency event, and it will count as a day of work for non-certified personnel. There are many different and essential roles that non-certified personnel serve within District 303, and depending on the role, the experience will be differentiated to better meet the needs of these employees.

Work Plan(s): There will be different expectations for non-certified employees depending on the nature and timing of their work. It is important that supervisors communicate the expectations on these days clearly to the employees. The supervisor's expectations will be the most important piece in defining the workday for non-certified D303 employees. In general, employees will have three different plans for work on these days, and again, the supervisors will communicate and approve work plans on the actual e-learning day. The three general work plans for e-learning days are as follows:

1. Employees who are required to be on site due to maintenance, technology, and potential snow removal will have timing and expectations communicated to them via normal channels before and on the date of the emergency event. Standard operating procedures will remain in place for this group of employees.
2. Employees who require student presence (such as teaching assistants) will either have clearly defined responsibilities during the work day, as directed by supervisors or teachers, or they may have a professional development opportunity.
3. Employees who can effectively work from home on their traditional tasks may have the option to work from on an e-learning day, if approved in advance by the Superintendent.