

# SOUTH WINDSOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Greetings families:

The weather in Connecticut during the long winter months is unpredictable, and often impacts the school schedule. Effective this school year, the South Windsor Board of Education has approved a districtwide pilot of the *Snow Day Scholars* program. This pilot is intended to allow students to demonstrate independent learning from home during emergency closings. More information about these days is summarized below:

## **What is the *Snow Day Scholars* Program?**

The *Snow Day Scholars* is a pilot program that will help us evaluate the benefits of allowing students to demonstrate independent learning from home during emergency closings. Students will engage in independent learning that reinforces core academic content in addition to promoting core competencies that contribute to their long-term success: resilience, innovative thinking, personal wellness, and social consciousness. The learning from home will happen with the understanding that a make-up school day will not need to be added to the calendar in June.

## **What are the benefits of the *Snow Day Scholars* program?**

The benefits to this pilot program include:

- limiting the disruption of learning when emergency closings occur;
- minimizing the impact on summer planning in June for families and staff planning vacations, camps or other activities for their children;
- encouraging students to take ownership of their learning; and
- assisting families and staff in their planning as it further protects the April vacation from being shortened.

## **How many *Snow Day Scholars* days could we have?**

For the first three occurrences of an emergency closing (inclement weather or otherwise), schools will be closed with no formal expectations of independent learning. The *Snow Day Scholars* program will only be initiated after the first three (3) emergency closing days. Upon the 4th and 5th emergency closing days, students will be engaged in independent learning. We will have no more than 2 independent learning days, which means that the 6th and all subsequent emergency closing days would continue to be added to the June calendar, as indicated in the table below.

Emergency Closing Day	Impact to School Calendar
1	School year extended by 1 day
2	School year extended by 2 days
3	School year extended by 3 days
4	Snow Day Scholars program. Students and teachers engaged in independent learning. No extension of the school year.
5	Snow Day Scholars program. Students and teachers engaged in independent learning. No extension of the school year.
6 - 9	School year extended by 1 day for each occurrence 6 - 9
10+	Days taken as needed from April vacation or from other days as recommended by the Superintendent

### **How will I know that a *Snow Day Scholars* day has been initiated?**

On the 4th and 5th emergency closing days, you will receive a call from Dr. Carter as usual announcing the school closing. Principals will follow up with a communication to all families reminding them that it is a *Snow Day Scholars* day. Teachers may also help remind students using See-Saw and/or Google Classroom that the 4th and 5th school closing will be a *Snow Day Scholars* day.

### **How will students know what to do on a *Snow Day Scholars* day?**

Each grade level has a “menu” of independent learning activities for students for each *Snow Day Scholars* day. The menus include activities from different content areas and provide different levels of challenge to accommodate all of our learners. All elementary students will receive a printed hard copy of their menu and supplemental worksheets in advance of the 4th and 5th emergency closing which they will bring home in their school folders. You can also access the activity menus and worksheets under the “Student” section, in the top right corner of any South Windsor Public Schools web page. On each *Snow Day Scholar* day, students should select and complete **at least** 4 of the 16 options on the menu.

### **Who collects the students’ completed work?**

Students will have an opportunity to share what work they did with their teacher and peers when they return to school after the school cancellation. If the activities they choose include one of the related worksheets or additional artifacts, we encourage students to bring them in.

### **How will the work impact my child’s grade?**

During this pilot year *Snow Day Scholars* work will not impact students’ grades. However, the projects and assignments have been carefully designed by teachers to promote student independence, as well as reinforce and enrich grade level learning.

If you have any questions about the *Snow Day Scholars* pilot program, please do not hesitate to reach out to your child’s teacher. We are excited to pilot this program, and thank you for your cooperation and support from home.

We wish you and your family a safe winter season!