

THE SENECA VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE ENACTMENT OF LEGISLATION CODIFYING
FLEXIBLE INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS INTO LAW**

WHEREAS, in 2014, the Acting Secretary of Education announced that a Flexible Instructional Days (“FIDs”) pilot program was available to schools across the Commonwealth;

WHEREAS, FIDs offer schools the ability to use non-traditional educational delivery methods on regularly scheduled school days in which circumstances, such as inclement weather, necessitate an alternate approach;

WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania Department of Education (“PDE”) has stated that the FIDs pilot program will end after this school year and will not be renewed without the enactment of new legislation;

WHEREAS, the Seneca Valley School Board of Directors (“Board”) fully supports the enactment of new legislation to permit school districts to use up to five (5) FIDs per calendar school year due to emergency inclement weather because the Seneca Valley School District (“District”) has successfully implemented a FIDs program beginning with the 2015-16 school year;

WHEREAS, after a significant investment of time and money, the District has developed an effective FIDs program that includes an online portal for students and teacher to access during FIDs. In addition, the District has trained its teachers to develop suitable lessons for students to access online and/or at their homes;

WHEREAS, every District student in grades K-12 has a school-issued electronic device and every student in grades 5-12 is permitted to take their devices home;

WHEREAS, the District has operated an in-house, on-line cyber school since 2008 that provides multiple platforms to deliver instruction;

WHEREAS, the District’s FIDs pilot program effectively educates students and allows them to learn on days that would otherwise be cancelled;

WHEREAS, on FIDs students log into the portal, complete their assignments for the day and submit work to their teachers. Teachers are available through email or phone to answer questions from their students;

WHEREAS, students who cannot access the portal are given ten days to make up school work that was otherwise completed on FIDs;

WHEREAS, FIDs are only used for true weather emergencies and are only utilized after two “built in” traditional snow-make up days, which are pre-scheduled on the District’s calendar, are utilized;

WHEREAS, the District’s FIDs program successfully prevents disruption in education. This year for example, inclement weather forced the District to close its schools for three consecutive days. The District was able to utilize two FIDs after a cancellation day which helped preserve the continuity of instruction. Without FIDs, this type of disruption equates to the loss of over two weeks of instruction because it is necessary to review previously covered material when students finally return after multiple days out of school;

WHEREAS, FIDs allow the District to provide predictable and consistent education despite the fact that the winter weather in Pennsylvania is very unpredictable and inconsistent. Some winters we have missed as much as 7-10 days of schools. By way of example, in the 2009-10 school year, the District had ten (10) two-hour delays and seven (7) closures. In the 2011-12 school year, the District had six (6) two-hour delays and zero (0) closures. In the 2012-13 school year, the District had four (4) delays and two (2) closures. In the 2013-14 school year, the District had five (5) two-hour delays and six (6) closures. In the 2014-15 school year, the District had twelve (12) two-hour delays and four (4) closures. In the 2015-16 school year, the District had three (3) two-hour delays and one (1) closure. In the 2016-17 school year, the District had six (6) two-hour delays and one (1) closure. In the 2017-18 school year, the District had seven (7) two-hour delays and five (5) closures. Already this winter we have had two (2) two-hour delays and five (5) closures and our winter season has not concluded.

WHEREAS, the District’s FIDs program keeps students safe at home and buses off of potentially dangerous roads;

WHEREAS, in addition to keeping students safe and providing students with an effective education on days when school would otherwise be cancelled, FIDs save the Seneca Valley School District significant amounts of money, including approximately \$200,000 in transportation costs.

WHEREAS, the District’s FIDs program is popular; the District surveyed parents, teachers and students about the District’s FIDs program after the program’s first year and a majority of the stakeholders all like the FIDs option.

WHEREAS, [House Bill No. 2690](#) proposes to amend the Pennsylvania School Code by adding a new Section 1506 which codifies Flexible Instructional Days into law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Seneca Valley School Board of Directors that:

1. The Board of Directors urges the Pennsylvania legislature to enact legislation, such as House Bill No. 2690, codifying Flexible Instructional Days into law so that the District and other school districts in the Commonwealth can continue operating successful FIDs programs.

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED, that this resolution be spread upon the official minutes of the Seneca Valley School Board of Directors for March 4, 2019 and that a copy be presented to Dr. Tracy Vitale for distribution to staff members of the Seneca Valley School District, other members of the Seneca Valley School District community and local, state and federal governmental representatives.



James Nickel, President
Seneca Valley School Board of Directors