

AN ACT concerning education.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The School Code is amended by changing Section 10-20.56 as follows:

(105 ILCS 5/10-20.56)

Sec. 10-20.56. E-learning days.

(a) The State Board of Education shall establish and maintain, for implementation in school districts, a program for use of electronic-learning (e-learning) days, as described in this Section. School districts may utilize a program approved under this Section for use during remote learning days and blended remote learning days under Section 10-30 or 34-18.66.

(b) The school board of a school district may, by resolution, adopt a research-based program or research-based programs for e-learning days district-wide that shall permit student instruction to be received electronically while students are not physically present in lieu of the district's scheduled emergency days as required by Section 10-19 of this Code or because a school was selected to be a polling place under Section 11-4.1 of the Election Code. The research-based program or programs may not exceed the minimum number of

emergency days in the approved school calendar and must be verified by the regional office of education or intermediate service center for the school district on or before September 1st annually to ensure access for all students. The regional office of education or intermediate service center shall ensure that the specific needs of all students are met, including special education students and English learners, and that all mandates are still met using the proposed research-based program. The e-learning program may utilize the Internet, telephones, texts, chat rooms, or other similar means of electronic communication for instruction and interaction between teachers and students that meet the needs of all learners. The e-learning program shall address the school district's responsibility to ensure that all teachers and staff who may be involved in the provision of e-learning have access to any and all hardware and software that may be required for the program. If a proposed program does not address this responsibility, the school district must propose an alternate program.

(c) Before its adoption by a school board, the school board must hold a public hearing on a school district's initial proposal for an e-learning program or for renewal of such a program, at a regular or special meeting of the school board, in which the terms of the proposal must be substantially presented and an opportunity for allowing public comments must be provided. Notice of such public hearing must

be provided at least 10 days prior to the hearing by:

(1) publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the school district;

(2) written or electronic notice designed to reach the parents or guardians of all students enrolled in the school district; and

(3) written or electronic notice designed to reach any exclusive collective bargaining representatives of school district employees and all those employees not in a collective bargaining unit.

(d) The regional office of education or intermediate service center for the school district must timely verify that a proposal for an e-learning program has met the requirements specified in this Section and that the proposal contains provisions designed to reasonably and practicably accomplish the following:

(1) to ensure and verify at least 5 clock hours of instruction or school work, as required under Section 10-19.05, for each student participating in an e-learning day;

(2) to ensure access from home or other appropriate remote facility for all students participating, including computers, the Internet, and other forms of electronic communication that must be utilized in the proposed program;

(2.5) to ensure that non-electronic materials are made

available to students participating in the program who do not have access to the required technology or to participating teachers or students who are prevented from accessing the required technology;

(3) to ensure appropriate learning opportunities for students with special needs;

(4) to monitor and verify each student's electronic participation;

(5) to address the extent to which student participation is within the student's control as to the time, pace, and means of learning;

(6) to provide effective notice to students and their parents or guardians of the use of particular days for e-learning;

(7) to provide staff and students with adequate training for e-learning days' participation;

(8) to ensure an opportunity for any collective bargaining negotiations with representatives of the school district's employees that would be legally required, including all classifications of school district employees who are represented by collective bargaining agreements and who would be affected in the event of an e-learning day;

(9) to review and revise the program as implemented to address difficulties confronted; and

(10) to ensure that the protocol regarding general

expectations and responsibilities of the program is communicated to teachers, staff, and students at least 30 days prior to utilizing an e-learning day.

The school board's approval of a school district's initial e-learning program and renewal of the e-learning program shall be for a term of 3 years.

(d-5) A school district shall pay to its contractors who provide educational support services to the district, including, but not limited to, custodial, transportation, or food service providers, their daily, regular rate of pay or billings rendered for any e-learning day that is used because a school was selected to be a polling place under Section 11-4.1 of the Election Code, except that this requirement does not apply to contractors who are paid under contracts that are entered into, amended, or renewed on or after March 15, 2022 or to contracts that otherwise address compensation for such e-learning days.

(e) The State Board of Education may adopt rules consistent with the provision of this Section.

(Source: P.A. 100-760, eff. 8-10-18; 101-12, eff. 7-1-19; 101-643, eff. 6-18-20.)