

Quarterly Update WRHS Special Ed

Feb 6, 2023

We are at the halfway point of the 22-23 school year. With three snow days on the calendar and the unpredictability of the weather over the next couple of months, we'll take time in this newsletter to explain why our team meeting calendar is adjusted with each snow day. Additionally, even though we are in the thick of winter, we will also use this letter to give an overview of ESY.

Snow Days and Team Meetings

Snow Day Adjustments: The high school has a 7-day rotating schedule. There are 7 blocks, with 6 periods that meet daily. In order to hold an official team meeting, at the very least we need a general education teacher, special education teacher, parents, student, school counselor, team chair, and service providers. The school counselors, service providers, team chair, and parents may have some flexibility in their schedules, but teachers, both special education and general education are locked into 5 teaching blocks within the 7 block system. For example, when we have a team meeting scheduled for 'A block' on Tuesday if we have a snow day that block now to keep the teacher availability it moves to Wednesday. That may keep the teacher availability in line, but of course, it complicates things with parent schedules, etc. It's challenging, to say the least. That is why we try to be proactive with the statement we put on each team meeting invitation that reads

INCLEMENT WEATHER NOTE:

DISTRICT CALLED SNOW DAY - ALL MEETINGS (including this one) on or scheduled thereafter a called snow day, will roll forward to the next in-session school day

2HR DELAY= Morning meetings affected by the delay time will be rescheduled.

This rarely works out perfectly and this past snow storm where we had three snow days in a row, really wreaked havoc on our calendar and required flexibility on all fronts. Thank you in advance for understanding the schedule we are tied to as a school and the snow day issues we work around.

ESY: Filling the Transition Planning Gap

For students that are working towards a diploma and requiring transition planning support beyond the typical general education student path, we have created a few ways to fill this gap. One, in particular, is with ESY services. If a student is working towards a high school diploma and through the team process, they are recommended for summer services, the ESY program they will participate in combines academic and transition readiness skill building. A portion of the day is spent addressing basic academic and functional skill remediation and there are at least two days a week with community outings and transition planning lessons that focus on readying for adult transitions. We cover topics such as financial literacy, with guides on tipping, reading pay stubs, and personal budgets just to name a few. There may also be some basic cooking lessons as well. The community outings include some recreational activities and exploring the outdoors, but students also may visit banks, libraries, and grocery stores. We work closely with the center for living and working during the school year, with monthly workshops that focus on pre-employment training and carry over these lessons to the summer program.

Upcoming Events

Upcoming Events: We have two exciting events planned for this spring. We will once again host a virtual transition fair and there will be a dance hosted by our Mountaineer Peer Club. The transition fair will be co-sponsored with our SEPAC organization and the date will be coming soon.

Save the date for March 10, Mary Gills and Candace Orrell are two special education teachers that serve as advisors for the Mountaineer Peer club. This spring there is an inclusive dance on the evening of March 10th. The students are organizing the dance. More information will be posted soon.