

Dear Portage Area School District Families,

We are happy to report that Portage Area School District has been approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education to take part in the Flexible Instructional Day (FID) Program. This program was designed to help schools avoid needing to extend the school year when unforeseen circumstances occur such as severe weather, power outages, or other temporary emergencies. We are permitted to use up to five (5) of these Flexible Instruction Days (Flex Days) per school year.

This program permits schools to provide online instruction when it is determined that a Flex Day is needed rather than canceling school completely. During a Flex Day, students are to remain at home and instruction will be delivered via Microsoft Teams. To access TEAMS, please go to our website: [www.portageareasd.org](http://www.portageareasd.org) and click on Students and then Office 365 log in.

Schedules for **Junior-Senior High students** will be posted on their TEAMS page. Students will have prior notice to take laptops/chargers home with them. **Junior-Senior High School students must be logged into their first period class on Microsoft TEAMS by 8:00am.**

Schedules for **Elementary students** will be sent home from their classroom teachers along with student's log in information, instructions, and any materials they may need for the day. A device will only be sent home if you checked that option on the device agreement that you signed and returned. **Elementary students must be logged into Microsoft TEAMS by 8:40am.**

We have provided more in-depth information regarding Flex Days with this letter. This information can also be found on our website at [www.portageareasd.org](http://www.portageareasd.org). We will be taking attendance in the morning and again throughout the day.

Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions.

Thank you,

Portage Area School District

## **What is a Flexible Instructional Day (Flex Day)?**

The Pennsylvania Department of Education permits school districts to use five Flexible Instructional Days (Flex Days) each year. These Flex Days can be used on days when school needs to be cancelled for reasons such as poor weather conditions, power outages, or other emergency issues that may occur throughout the year. During these Flex Days, students will be provided instructional activities to complete online through Microsoft Teams for each of the classes held on that particular day. Microsoft Teams is used regularly throughout the school year by all of the Portage Area School District students and teachers. Students will not require any additional training. On Flex Days, we encourage parents and students to sit down together to review the work that has been assigned and if the work has been completed.

## **How will you know if a Flex Day is being announced?**

Portage Area School District makes every effort to cancel school completely (traditional snow day) or call for a Flex Day as soon as possible through our all-call system, on our website, social media, and through our local news media. The all-call system will clearly identify if school is cancelled completely or if a Flex Day is being used.

## **What are students expected to do during a Flex Day?**

Like any other school day, attendance is required. Students are expected to login to Microsoft Teams by their specified time (unless your child's individual schedule denotes otherwise). Should the student not have internet access, they should contact the appropriate school building by 9:00am.

Elementary School

(814) 736-9636 ext. 1200 or email at [esattendance@mustangmail.org](mailto:esattendance@mustangmail.org)

Junior-Senior High School

(814) 736-9636 ext. 1300 or email [hsattendance@mustangmail.org](mailto:hsattendance@mustangmail.org)

If attendance is not reported for the student, the day will be considered unexcused. During a Flex Day, students are required to login to Microsoft Teams, participate in class, and complete any work for that day. Should a student not have internet access, the student can receive a hard copy of the assignment upon return to school. All students will have one (1) day to complete and turn in the assignments. Should assignments not be turned in, the student will be marked absent unexcused.

## **What type of devices can be used to access Microsoft Teams?**

Microsoft Teams can be accessed from a variety of electronic devices such as Smartphones, iPads, laptops, and desktop computers. We strongly encourage the student to check their ability to access Microsoft Teams from the different devices used in their home.