

Future e-Learning raises questions

Staff Editorial

Effective Dec. 11, District 99 will utilize e-Learning days in lieu of traditional snow days. This comes following new guidelines from the Illinois School Board of Education which lay out specific requirements for an e-Learning day. These changes resolve many of the criticisms students and teachers had following last year's pilot run.

While these new promises do sound great in a one-page email, administration must ensure that students aren't left empty-handed and adjustments continue to be made.

In the district's email to students and parents, the new ISBE guidelines state in each class there should be an assignment "that will take students approximately 50 minutes to complete." This marks a change from last year where most work given to students took 20 minutes or less, thus solving some

students' problems with last year's pilot where they felt they didn't get the same amount of work done at home as they would have at school.

Material for any future e-Learning days must also be "meaningful and continue to move students through the curriculum." While this was likely the goal during last year's pilot, a portion of students felt this was not the case. In the future, teachers must make sure they adequately communicate the relevance and importance of the assigned material.

Additionally, in a memo sent to District 99 teachers, it was said that teachers are expected to be "available, through G-Suite products... for responding to student questions in a timely manner, during normal school hours." This resolves another criticism certain students had with last year's pilot where they felt helpless without the school resources they typically

rely on.

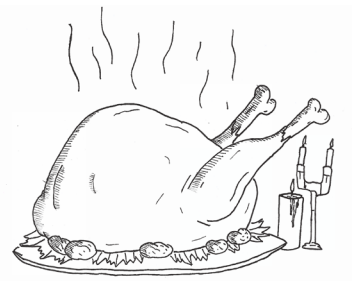
Strong proponents of e-Learning days will say that these changes solve any criticisms students had with last year's pilot. However, as was stated in the e-Learning presentation to the board, administration must continue to "review and revise" following each e-Learning day.

So far, the district has

followed through on this promise, acknowledging the shortcomings of the pilot and potential imperfections with future early attempts. District 99 must continue this down the road and collaborate with students and teachers to ensure that e-Learning days create the best possible alternative to school cancellations.



Graphic by Elliot Sheets



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Ranked: Turkey Day foods

By Drey McGrew,
Copy Editor

Thanksgiving is one of my favorite holidays simply because of the food that is served. From hot turkey and stuffing to mashed potatoes and mixed vegetables, nothing can go wrong with your Thanksgiving Day meal.

First, my favorite course is the dessert. Pumpkin pie with whipped cream is my go-to dish on Thanksgiving. The hot, sweet filling of pumpkin accompanied by the cold whip cream makes for a delicious treat.

Second, the vegetables, you can never go wrong with mashed potatoes and vegetables mixed together. I know what you're thinking, vegetables are gross and vegetables taste nasty. But you're wrong.

Third, the most common food served on Thanksgiving is the turkey, but sadly turkey is my least favorite thing to eat.

I think turkey is always too dry and flavorless. It is never seasoned right and doesn't go well with anything else.

I always find myself trying to find salt and other seasonings to put on top of my turkey to make it taste better. It never tastes the way I want it to.

Honestly I wouldn't mind a chicken substitute.

Fourth, don't even get me started on the stuffing. Stuffing is horrendous, I feel that it is the grossest thing to eat on Thanksgiving Day. You will never catch me grabbing a spoonful of stuffing during this Thanksgiving.

Fifth, bread is always a good choice. No matter if its garlic bread or biscuits, you can never go wrong with bread.

Thanksgiving ultimately is the best holiday to look forward to because of the food. I personally think that the food that is served on Thanksgiving is what brings families together.

Rise & shine: All days should be late starts to aid health of students

By Vincent Llanes,
Copy Editor

The best days, by far, are the days where I feel alert and upbeat. Being able to walk down the hallways greeting others and completing work with gusto allows me to feel a true sense of accomplishment. These days are just amazing; I actually feel like a productive member of our school community.

And what do these days have in common? No, it's not the coffee or me looking forward to the school grind; it's that extra hour of sleep. In fact, each hour of sleep is important; each teenager needs nine.

Sleep is good. It is important for not just having a good day, but it is also an absolute necessity for good health. According to the U.S Department of Health and Human Services, sleep impacts "mental health, physical health, quality of life and safety."

Sleep is really hard to find these days. There is a whole heap of things that are going on in the lives of students that many people may not recognize, including clubs, academic teams and homework.

Teenagers need time to fulfill their emotional needs, especially when considering the mental health issues in contemporary times. Sports and music fulfill these needs.

Unfortunately, these things demand time, a commodity that teenagers will drain from the night, which is a fancy way of saying that students will go to bed at midnight just so they can meet the heavy demands of a typical school day.

With that said, sleep deprivation appears to be a new issue affecting many teenagers and appears to have a plethora of negative effects — from weakened immunity to high blood pressure according to Healthline. Sleep deprivation can negatively impact academics, sports and mental health. However, little emphasis is placed on sleep when teenagers have so many other important priorities to manage.

And this issue does not pertain just to DGS. Researchers from San Diego State University have found that about 40 percent of teenagers got fewer than seven hours of sleep, which is already far below



Drowsy seniors take a quick nap during their lunch to catch up on sleep.

Photo by Vincent Llanes

the recommended amount of sleep.

While it's ultimately the responsibility of teenagers to manage their sleep, it's important that getting a good night's sleep is promoted. A way to promote healthy sleeping habits and encourage proper development is by having later start times.

Having later starts would be effective because it would ensure most students get over nine hours of sleep. I do not believe students would waste this extra sleeping time allotted to them. Throughout my time in high school, I have realized that students don't stay up out of force of habit; students stay up late because the extra time is necessary.

Since every school day

would start later, students can easily get nine hours of sleep. This would give students time to complete their own obligations and schoolwork, while giving them time to make the choice to get some sleep.

Students will choose sleep. Teenagers complain about it all the time, and they will certainly take the opportunity of getting sleep when given it.

The benefits greatly outweigh the possible downsides. Sure, there would be a loss of time for certain classes; however, students will now be alert, focused, and content. This change would impact academics, work and home life greatly.

Everyone wants and needs sleep. Moving school start times is a big step toward improving this issue.