

Lakota Built In Reserve for Possible Closures, Delays

Snow days are falling by the wayside – at least according to a new Ohio law.

Effective with the 2014-15 school year, Ohio schools are required to be in session a specific number of *hours*. Previously, the requirement called for a specific number of *days*.

School districts must provide at least 910 hours of instruction for students in grades K-6. For students in grades 7-12, it's 1,001 hours, with some allowance for seniors, who can still finish the school year earlier than the younger grade levels.

For each school year, Lakota builds in more than the minimum number of required hours. In the 2014-15 school year, for example, the hours were as follows.

Grade Levels	Scheduled Instructional Hours	Required Instructional Hours per Ohio Law	Instructional Hours per School Day
Half-Day Kindergarten	492	455	2.75
Grades K-6	1,029	910	5.75
Grades 7-8	1,074	1,001	6
Grades 9-11	1,088	1,001	6.08
Grade 12	1,070	1,001*	6.08

This schedule gives Lakota schools a substantial built-in reserve to accommodate multiple delays or closures during the school year, if needed. Previously, Ohio law allowed up to only five calamity days before schools had to initiate make-up days.

Should any Lakota school fall below the required minimum hours due to unscheduled school closings or delays, additional hours/days will be added to the current schedule. Blizzard bags (alternative assignments students can do at home) are still allowed to substitute instruction for up to three days.

** The new law retains the excusal of Grade 12 students from attendance for up to the equivalent of three regular school days (or 18.24 hours for Lakota East and Lakota West high schools). Like in years past, this allows seniors to finish the school year earlier than the younger grade levels.*