

February 26, 2020

Dear Hawthorn School District 73 Parents and Guardians:

Student, staff and stakeholder health, safety and well-being are our highest priorities. As such, with the recently elevated discussion regarding the Coronavirus, the United States, and public institutions, including schools, we want to take a moment to reinforce best-practice preventative safety measures, and reference our working process, decision-making, and communication in the extreme event of a virus infection affecting Hawthorn School District 73.

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19 infection. As with any respiratory virus, students and school personnel can protect themselves and others by taking every day common-sense actions:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

At this point, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) does NOT recommend:

- The use of masks or gloves
- Cancelling mass gatherings
- Cancelling classes

The Lake County Health Department (LCHD) continues to work with related federal, state, and local agencies to monitor the Coronavirus and share critical information among those agencies. In the extreme event of a virus detection that might impact Hawthorn School District 73, LCHD would take the immediate lead in assessment, advice and direction, up to and including decision-making and communication in conjunction with district officials.

Rest assured, we would follow the direction and recommendations of our public health officials. We are following the recommendation from the IDPH that any student who returned from mainland China on Feb. 3, 2020 and onward should not attend school for 14 days after the return date.

In light of February 25 CDC comments regarding a possible Coronavirus outbreak affecting schools and advising schools to plan ahead for a virus-related closing, in the extreme event of a

necessary school closing at Hawthorn School District 73, we would follow the guidance of the LCHD and the Illinois State Board of Education.

In closing, Hawthorn School District 73 will continue to work closely with LCHD regarding the Coronavirus and other infectious diseases, and we will continue to share important information with you as it becomes available.

Sincerely,

Dr. Pete Hannigan
Superintendent
Hawthorn School District 73