

Dear Parent(s) and Guardian(s),

We hope this message finds you and your family well. Thank you for continuing to work with our district staff in new and unexpected ways to promote the physical health, emotional well-being, and ongoing learning of all Hawthorn students. We are so appreciative of your continued partnership and support as we navigate these challenging times together. As we head into the next school week, please consider reading through the updates shared below.

Your child's learning plan for the week of April 6th will post to our [remote learning webpage](#) by 5:00 p.m. this evening, should you and/or your child wish to preview the content prior to Monday morning. Please note there are some changes to the format of your child's plan. These shifts were made in accordance with parent feedback, the extension of school closures, and newly released guidance from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). Your child's learning activities and assignments are now organized into a daily calendar for the week; learning activities and assignments for our elementary music and art classes are scheduled on specific days. You will also find weekly social-emotional learning lessons for our elementary students, and thematic, bi-weekly lessons to support social-emotional learning at the middle school level. While this new format is intended to provide additional support and structure, students are welcome to engage in learning at any time that works for your family. Please continue to use the links on the first page of your child's plan to guide and support you.

During the weeks of April 6th and 13th, our early childhood, pre-kindergarten, and elementary families will receive communication from their child(s) teachers about the implementation of a comprehensive learning management system to support student success. Specifically, our early childhood through second grade families will receive an invitation to join Seesaw, and our third through fifth grade families will receive information about Google Classroom. These tools support more accessible and interactive remote learning experiences for students, and mirror the ongoing use of Canvas and Google Classroom at the middle school level. If your child's teacher is already using Seesaw or Google Classroom to engage your child in learning, you will simply continue to use these tools. We are excited to bring these impactful learning and communication platforms to all of our early childhood, pre-kindergarten, and elementary families this month!

As you may know, ISBE's newly released guidance to school districts reflects a transition from e-Learning to remote learning. While there are many similarities between the two, recommendations related to remote learning include specific guidelines around grading, assessments, and priorities. Throughout the past week, our staff members have been hard at work preparing to implement ISBE's published recommendations by Monday, April 6th. Please see below for highlights from ISBE's published report, as these updates impact our work together on behalf of students.

- The health and wellness of all Illinois students and staff is the fundamental priority at this time; ISBE supports a focus on keeping children emotionally and physically safe, fed, and engaged in learning.
- Remote learning attends to the diversity of each community to ensure that all students have access to equitable educational opportunities. To the greatest extent possible, remote learning plans minimize the negative impact on our students' educational trajectories.
- ISBE prioritizes connectedness and care for students and staff. The emphasis is on student progress and learning, not assignment completion or due dates. All students have the opportunity to try again and show academic progress.
- When appropriate for a specific student and/or assignment, students in grades K-8 may now receive teacher feedback in the form of quality descriptor scores. These are the scores currently used on our report cards, and are defined as follows: 4-exceeds learning standards, 3-meets learning standards, 2-approaches learning standards, 1-experiences difficulty.
- Students in grades K-8 may participate in formative assessments and earn quality descriptor scores. Our teachers use students' assessment results to inform future instruction.

- All grading guidance is based on the underlying principle of no educational harm to any child. Student grades, as reflected in our quality descriptor scores, must only maintain or improve during this period of school closures. No letter grades or percentage points are earned at the elementary or middle school levels. Instead, the emphasis is on student progress and learning.

In addition, ISBE now provides school districts with a limited number of “Remote Learning Planning Days.” These days allow staff members to spend time engaging in structured training and planning sessions focused on remote learning. Please know your child will continue to receive a comprehensive learning plan on these days; live conferencing or other forms of “real-time” communication will not be scheduled. Our district’s first Remote Learning Planning Day is scheduled for Monday, April 6th so that staff may participate in formalized professional development to ensure their successful implementation of ISBE’s newly issued recommendations. The dates of any future Remote Learning Planning Days will be shared with you as they become available.

In an effort to best support our families in navigating the transition from e-Learning to ISBE’s newly defined remote learning, we are sharing our updated [Hawthorn District 73 Remote Learning Plan](#) with you. This plan reflects e-Learning practices that we are continuing to employ, as well as the newly implemented guidance from ISBE that is specific to remote learning. Please keep in mind that each child is different, and learning looks different in a home environment. If you find that the learning activities and assignments posted to your child’s plan are requiring either more or less time and parent/guardian support than expected, please connect with your child(s) teacher. We are here to support you!

We know and respect that each family is facing different challenges during this crisis, and our collective focus is on the safety and well-being of our Hawthorn community. Toward this end, each week you will receive a message from our district’s social workers and psychologists to promote social and emotional wellness. This resource will be shared with you by your child’s building principal and is titled, “Hawthorn 73 Social Emotional Corner.” If at any time you find that you or a loved one are in need of additional assistance, please visit our [remote learning webpage](#) to access the contact information for your child’s school social worker and/or view our list of community resources.

Thank you, again, for your continued support and partnership during this unprecedented and challenging time. We are honored to serve a community so dedicated to ensuring the health and well-being of each and every child.

Sincerely,

The Hawthorn District 73 Department of Teaching and Learning

Dr. Arturo Abrego, Director of Bilingual Education and Language Acquisition

Ms. Lauren Boardman, Instructional Coach

Dr. Carie Cohen, Special Education Coordinator

Dr. Karen Maturo, Coordinator of Professional Development

Mr. John Reid, Director of Instructional Technology

Ms. Allison Stein, Director of Teaching and Learning

Ms. Alma Tamayo, Special Education Coordinator

Mrs. Renee Ullberg, Director of Student Services