

October 20, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

As you have probably seen on the news, Lake County and the State of Illinois are currently experiencing a dramatic increase in COVID-19 cases. On October 20th, the level of community transmission in Lake County was moved into the “substantial” category. When a community reaches this stage of a pandemic, significant mitigation strategies must be put in place to reduce the spread of the disease.

On July 28, 2020, the Hawthorn Board of Education approved a resolution giving me the authority to modify the district’s return to learning plans at any time. This resolution ensures that our return to learning plans are in constant alignment with the guidance set forth by the Lake County Health Department and the State of Illinois. The health and safety of our students, staff, and families remains our top priority. Per guidance reflected in the [Lake County School Decision Dashboard](#), all students will continue to learn remotely until further notice. The Lake County Health Department will recommend hybrid learning once the county returns to the “moderate” level for 7 consecutive days.

- Early Childhood will not begin hybrid learning on Monday, October 26.
- Pre-kindergarten classes, as well as K-2 students in our self-contained special education program will not begin hybrid learning on Monday, November 9.

With that being said, our early childhood, pre-kindergarten, and K-2 self-contained special education staff will still meet on Thursday, October 29th for the purpose of planning for hybrid learning. Maintaining this professional development day for staff supports preparedness for our students’ participation in hybrid learning. Therefore, students enrolled in our **early childhood** and **pre-kindergarten classes**, as well as **K-2 students in our self-contained special education program** will still have a student non-attendance day on Thursday, October 29.

Our next Board of Education meeting is scheduled for November 12th at 7:00 p.m. At that time, we will provide an update with respect to public health data and the impact this data will have on the start date of hybrid instruction for our students.

Lowering rates of community transmission is an ongoing community effort. Please be sure to follow public health measures to help reduce virus transmission, including:

- Wear a mask
- Wash your hands

- Watch your distance

We know what a challenging time this has been for many, and sincerely thank our parents, families, students, and staff for their patience and flexibility. Please keep up to date with our plans by regularly checking our website at www.hawthorn73.org.

Sincerely,

Peter Hannigan, Ed.D.
Superintendent