

January 11, 2021

Dear Hawthorn Parents/Guardians,

I hope this message finds you well, and that you enjoyed some time together as a family in celebration of the new year.

The purpose of this letter is to share an important update regarding the implementation of our hybrid learning model. Our decision to return students to in-person learning has always prioritized the health and safety of students, staff, and our Hawthorn community. We have continued to use guidance from the Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois Department of Public Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Northern Illinois Public Health Consortium.

Toward that end, on Friday, January 8th we held a special meeting of the [Board of Education](#) to discuss the Northern Illinois Public Health Consortium's updated guidance for schools. Due to changes in recommendations at the state and national levels, the consortium is migrating to a risk stratified model. This model provides for the implementation of solid mitigation strategies, in addition to specific rates of transmission, as indicators for making decisions regarding remote, hybrid, or in-person learning.

Solid mitigation strategies significantly reduce the risk of transmission in our schools. Hawthorn District 73 has developed mitigation strategies in alignment with the guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health, Illinois State Board of Education, and Lake County Department of Health. We will continue to evaluate the public health data and adhere to mitigation practices, with the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff as our top priority.

With the consortium's new guidance for schools in place, we are following the timeline below to implement the hybrid model approved by our Board of Education.

- **January 21, 2021:** Remote Planning Day (Early Release Day is cancelled)
 - Student non-attendance day for K-8 general education and grades 3-8 self-contained special education.
 - Students enrolled in early childhood, pre-kindergarten, and K-2 self-contained special education are in attendance.
- **January 28, 2021:** Remote Planning Day
 - Students are not in attendance
- **Week of February 1, 2021:** Hybrid Learning Begins for Select Grade Levels
 - Students registered for hybrid learning and enrolled in early childhood, pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, grades 1-2, or grade 6 attend school in-person.
 - All other students continue to attend remotely.
- **Week of February 8, 2021:** Hybrid Learning Begins for Remaining Grade Levels
 - All students registered for hybrid learning attend school in-person.
 - All students registered for remote learning continue to attend remotely.

On the afternoon of Thursday, January 7th, families that registered for hybrid learning were notified via SchoolMessenger that information regarding their child's in-person attendance was available in the [PowerSchool Parent Portal](#). If transportation was requested, route information will be available via the portal during the week of January 25.

As a reminder, students registered for hybrid learning attend school in-person for two days each week, during a typical school week.

- Students enrolled in kindergarten - eighth grade who are assigned to Hybrid Group 1 (Track A) attend school in-person on Mondays and Tuesdays. Students assigned to Hybrid Group 2 (Track B) attend school in-person on Thursdays and Fridays. All students attend remotely on Wednesdays.
- Students enrolled in early childhood and pre-kindergarten who are assigned to Hybrid Group 1 (Track E) attend school on Mondays and Wednesdays. Students assigned to Hybrid Group 2 (Track F) attend school on Tuesdays and Fridays. All students attend remotely on Thursdays.

If you registered your child for hybrid learning and have reconsidered your decision, or would like to delay in person attendance, please contact your child's school office. Given the Northern Illinois Public Health Consortium's updated guidelines for returning to in-person learning, families registered for hybrid learning may coordinate a later return date with their child's principal or assistant principal.

Thank you for your support of our students, staff, and families during this pandemic. We are looking forward to a time when all students and staff can safely return to our schools together.

Regards,

Pete Hannigan, Ed.D.
Superintendent