



# GENESE O

COMMUNITY UNIT  
SCHOOL DISTRICT #228

Where the *future* grows.

April 6, 2020

228 Parents and Guardians,

I want to thank those of you who submitted questions during our latest survey sent out Friday afternoon. There were multiple questions with similar themes relating to grades, homework, retention/promotion, enrichment opportunities, summer school and Extended School Year (ESY), stress to your family and Social Emotional Learning resources needed over this break (SEL), and connectivity issues. I hope to provide some broad clarity to those questions here, knowing that each situation for our 2,700 students is different and individual responses for individual questions or concerns may need to be addressed by your child's classroom teacher or building principal.

Please understand that all of this is new to us. Our Remote Learning Plan is fluid and will continue to be modified based on feedback from all of our stakeholders. Staff will be having a Remote Learning Planning Day on Monday, April 13th to review our Plan's effectiveness through collaboration and make any necessary changes for the future weeks.

## **Remote Learning Update**

The Governor extended school closures and the "stay at home" order through April 30th. As of now, schools will reopen on May 1st, but we are watching the situation closely and will update you if this changes.

## **Grades**

During this time, no student's grade will be negatively impacted. Students will have an opportunity to improve their current academic standing, however, by completing or redoing previous work. **Our goal is to have each student earn a passing grade and be promoted to the next grade level or the next course, while continuing to academically challenge our young learners through flexible and supporting Remote learning.**

## **Homework**

Our focus at this time is on learning. We want students to be able to have some choice when it comes to which assignments to do, when those assignments are done, and when/how those assignments are submitted to their teacher. We realize that there is a broad range of family support for students at this time and resources available. There are some students who have both parents at home and a device with internet access readily available, but conversely there are students who are fully on their own for support. We are trying to create a system that allows each child to be successful under each of these circumstances. **If a family is in need of resources, including access to a computer and internet, please contact your child's teacher,**

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**call your child’s school, or call the district office and we will work with you to get the resources you need.**

Here is guidance from ISBE: The following ISBE recommendations and guidelines are presented as suggested minimum and maximum times of engagement by each student in remote learning activities. You may have more or less than the guidance below based on your child's needs, grade level, and academic course load, as these are only guidelines.

Grade Level	Minimum	Maximum	Recommended Length of Sustained Attention
PreK	20 minutes/day	60 minutes/day	3-5 minutes
K	30 minutes/ day	90 minutes/day	3-5 minutes
1-2	45 minutes/day	90 minutes/day	5-10 minutes
3-5	60 minutes/day	120 minutes/day	10-15 minutes
6-8	Class: 15 minutes/day Total: 90 minutes/day	Class: 30 minutes/day Total: 180 minutes/day	1 subject area or class
9-12	Class: 20 minutes/day Total: 120 minutes/day	Class: 45 minutes/day Total: 270 minutes/day	1 subject area or class

Further, we encourage teachers to give additional optional work, engagement opportunities, and enrichment opportunities (e.g., independent research projects) as long as it is made clear to students and families that the work is optional and will not negatively impact a student’s grade. Additional engagement is especially important for primary grades, where it is not developmentally appropriate to expect a student to attend to academic tasks for a long period of time. Instead, students and families should be supported in having access to varied enrichment opportunities. In addition, students and families are encouraged to support academic skills and social-emotional health through activities that extend beyond assigned remote learning work.

### **Enrichment**

Recognizing that we serve a diverse student population, we understand that some families are looking for more structure and rigor. Your child’s teacher(s) and building principal would be happy to provide more individual guidance on enrichment opportunities for your child. **Please reach out to them, so they can work with you to come up with a plan that meets your needs and expectations.**

### **Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Support**

We recognize that this situation can cause new anxiety and stress for our students and families. We want you to know that your child’s learning should not be adding to that stress. Know that each teacher and each administrator will work with you when it comes to homework, grades, and

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end of the year items. **Our staff is here, even if remotely, for our students and their families. Our counselors and social workers can still be reached through their school email for support.**

### **Summer School and Extended School Year (ESY)**

Our last day of student attendance is scheduled for Friday, May 22. That is 46 days away from today. Know that we will look at these topics as we get closer to them, but we want our focus and your focus to be on the present and meeting your and your child's needs today.

At our opening day teacher institute this year, I referenced this is the 50th anniversary of the first moon landing and the first steps taken by Neil Armstrong. I asked our staff to be explorers and be willing to try new things. Little did I know how prophetic those words would become. Please be patient as we all get adjusted to our Remote Learning Plan, making any necessary changes to meet the needs of our stakeholders. I encourage you to make your family your priority during this time, putting school work down your list of priorities, with the understanding that we will work with you each step of the way until we are back together again.

As always, please reach out to me if you are not getting the assistance you need from your child's teacher or building principal. We are here to help.

Adam

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