



Illinois State Board of Education

ISBE Remote Learning FAQ for Families

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) compiled the following recommendations for families to understand how to support students during the mandatory suspension of in-person instruction. View additional information and detailed Remote Learning Recommendations in [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Polish](#), and [Arabic](#). Additionally, view continually updated FAQs regarding the suspension of in-person instruction at www.isbe.net/covid19 under ISBE General Guidance. If you do not have internet access, you may wish to contact your district to request assistance in obtaining printed copies of these resources.

When will children and students be able to return to school?

The Governor, in consultation with state public health officials, will determine when children can return to programs and schools. On May 5, the Governor released a regionalized, five-phase [Restore Illinois plan](#) detailing a public health approach to safely reopen our state. While we do not know when the public health conditions for resuming in-person learning will be met, ISBE is in the process of developing guidance for when the time comes to transition back to in-person instruction.

Schools and districts should plan to conduct summer school via remote learning in 2020. Remote learning for summer school will mean that learning will continue to occur outside of the traditional classroom; educators and students will remain physically separated. It is expected that summer remote learning will take different forms across Illinois. What is most important is for districts to plan so that all students who need to can participate in summer school irrespective of access to resources. Summer school course enrollment will be determined by the school and district. Please see [ISBE's Summer School Guidance for Schools and Districts](#) for additional information.

What is remote learning?

Remote learning is learning that happens outside of the traditional classroom because the student and teacher are separated by distance and/or time. Remote learning can be done in real-time, or at flexible times, and it may or may not involve technology.

How will remote learning be delivered?

Access to quality educational materials and supports needed to successfully access those materials should be available to all families. Especially during this time, it is important that schools and teachers maintain a personal connection with students in ways that acknowledge and are respectful of different students' individual assets, backgrounds, and circumstances.

Districts must ensure their method of remote learning accounts for students and families with diverse circumstances including: language needs, special education needs, social and emotional needs, caregiving needs, and technological needs. To ensure remote learning is successful for all families, parents and caregivers must expect and receive access to clear information and enough resources to support your children.

Districts are required to create and post Remote Learning Plans on their website. Please reach out to your school or district to obtain information regarding the implementation of remote learning at your district.

What if we are unable to access the internet or a computer at home?

School districts will provide information about discounted and free internet during Remote Learning Days. Also, many school districts are hoping to distribute devices to families in need. Please contact your district directly for assistance with technology needs. Additionally, Illinois agencies have worked collaboratively to build a [map/list of Drive-Up Wi-Fi Hotspots](#) throughout the state of Illinois.

Districts and schools are also expected to provide students and families with printed learning materials when necessary. Instructions for projects and activities should be provided in clear language free of technical terms to support parents as they support their child(ren) at home. Remote learning resources and materials, including library books, etc., to the extent possible, should be made available at food pickup sites, delivered by school buses, etc. Another method of distribution of academic materials is the use of drive-thru lines, in which parents and guardians are given learning materials by essential staff members when you drive to the school building.

What should we expect in terms of communication with and from our district and school?

Districts and schools should be communicating and engaging with parents and families regularly to ensure there is a clear understanding about how to best support students, so they are as successful as possible during this time. Communication should be accessible to a variety of family situations and take into account different language needs, broadband access, and ability to read education-specific material. Schools should ask families about their needs and respond timely with recommendations that respond to those needs.

How will grades and attendance be handled during Remote Learning Days?

Student work completed during the suspension of in-person instruction must not negatively impact a student's grades or otherwise impact a student's academic standing. As we do not yet know the full extent of the closure and want to minimize any negative effects on students, schools may allow student work to count during the closure ONLY to increase a student's academic standing. Districts are allowed to create their own attendance policies and are expected to include a check-in or some method of tracking "attendance."

How can I best support my student at home?

- Review work assigned to the student.
- Reserve a space for students to complete remote learning work.
- Encourage students to get enough sleep.
- Set sensible time limits for technology use.
- Talk to students about their work every day.
- Help students establish and follow regular daily routines

What resources are available to help me support my child?

- Remote Learning Recommendations are available in multiple languages at www.isbe.net/covid19.
- Continuing Education Resources are available at www.isbe.net/keeplearning.
- ISBE encourages teachers and families to support academic skills and social-emotional health through activities that extend beyond assigned remote learning work. Examples are provided in the chart on page 4.

Do Illinois school districts have to provide meals to students during the suspension of in-person instruction?

All students who qualify for free breakfast and/or lunch during the school year are eligible for free meals during the suspension of in-person instruction. ISBE encourages school districts to provide meals to all students and families who may need food due to the impact of the Covid-19 shelter-in-place order.

Will state assessments be suspended for Spring 2020?

All state assessments, including the Illinois Assessment of Readiness, PSAT 8/9 and PSAT 10, SAT, DLM-AA, the Illinois Science Assessment, and Constitution exam, have been suspended for Spring 2020 and are expected to resume the following school year. For students wanting to take the AP Exam for the 2019-20 exam administration only, students can take a 45-minute online exam at home. Students will be able to take these streamlined exams on any device they have access to— computer, tablet, or smartphone.

How will the suspension of in-person instruction impact graduation requirements for students?

ISBE highly recommends districts strategize and prepare for how it can meet the needs of graduating seniors, including ensuring transcripts are accessible and students have the continued ability to request recommendations from teachers and the district.

Executive Order 2020-31 and emergency rules provide the following flexibilities for the class of 2020:

- Waives State’s final accountability assessment (SAT), requirement to complete examination on patriotism and principles of representative government, physical education participation requirements, physical education assessment requirements, foreign language proficiency exam to receive credit from an ethnic school;
- Modifies the minimum years of course requirements in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and music/art/foreign language/vocational education for high school seniors;
- Waives the requirement for eighth grade students to demonstrate evidence of having a comprehensive knowledge of the history of the United States;
- Addresses vocational or technical education course substitutions.

The new graduation requirements are the minimum state requirements. Individual districts have discretion as to whether they lower their own requirements. Please contact your district for additional information regarding graduation. Please see [ISBE’s Graduation Requirement Changes FAQ](#) for additional information.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL REMOTE LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Mind	Body	Spirit	Environment	Family
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading, e.g., independent reading, listening to someone else read, audiobooks • Puzzles, Word Searches • Write a story or in a journal • Count money • Draw a map of your neighborhood • Building with blocks or Legos • Listen to a podcast • Watch a documentary • Practice another language • Invent something 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a walk • Dance • Exercise • Fine/gross motor activities • Stretch or do yoga • Play a sport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to music or sing • Playing (inside or outside) • Creative arts • Coloring or drawing • Imaginative play • Meditate • Do something you've been avoiding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean up your room • Do age appropriate chores • Gardening • Fix something broken • Take care of pets or plants • Cook or bake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a letter to someone • Play board games with a family member • Tell jokes or riddles • Build a fort and tell stories in it • Offer to help someone