

October 30, 2020

Dear Parents,

Today, Governor Kate Brown released updated health metrics and guidance - developed in conjunction with the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and Oregon Department of Education (ODE) - for the return of students to in-person learning. We are still reviewing this new information and evaluating what it will mean for our district; however, we wanted to share this announcement with you right away.

We also wanted to provide you with an update on our preparations for students' eventual return to the classroom.

First, to clear up any confusion about Quarter 2 (November 16 – January 29): ***all students for Quarter 2 will be in Comprehensive Distance Learning (CDL) until the metrics allow us to return to in-person school.*** How soon we will return to in-person learning will still be determined by county metrics and the new metric guidance released today. ***As of today and based on the new metric guidance, Washington County and the Banks School District does NOT meet the new metric guidance to transition to in-person instruction.***

Our goal, of course, is to get students back into our buildings for in-person learning as soon as it is safe to do so. We anticipate there being a more attainable path to that return in these new metrics and guidelines, especially for our youngest learners and students who are at-risk under the current model.

To that end, teachers will be sending out surveys to families of students in grades K-12 next week. The purpose of the survey is to get a sense of how many students might come to school in person when the opportunity is available. Having this information will help our staff prepare our classrooms and other instructional spaces accordingly.

Once the metrics allow us to return to school, **focusing on the younger grades first**, we anticipate needing approximately four weeks to transition entire grade levels of our youngest students back to in-person learning, in a manner roughly following this timeline:

Week 1: Refine transition plan, communicate with Health Authority	Week 1: Notify staff and community; continue safety protocol training	Week 2: Communicate transportation plan and schedules to impacted families	Week 3: Transition week for staff	Week 4: Transition week for students
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Throughout the transition, we would need to be meeting the required health metrics and following advice from our state and local health authorities. ***As of today, we have not yet entered Week 1 of this timeline and Washington County does not meet the new metric requirements to transition to in-person learning at this time.***

When we do return to in-person learning, we will follow all recommended health and safety precautions such as:

- All staff and students wear facemasks* (*[current guidance](#) states that face shields should not be worn alone unless there is a need for the person's mouth to be seen for

communication purposes or there is a medical reason the person cannot/should not wear a facemask)

- Physical distancing of 6 feet is maintained
- Students have 35 square feet of space in their learning area
- Health screening questions are answered daily
- Health hygiene practices are followed: using hand sanitizer and washing hands frequently, covering coughs and sneezes, staying home when sick, and avoiding close contact with people who are ill

Detailed information on our health and safety protocols and procedures for managing situations where students begin to feel ill at school will be provided prior to a return to in-person learning.

Please note that even when students are able to return to in-person learning opportunities, whether those are full-time or part-time in a hybrid model, we will continue to offer CDL and will need to be prepared to return to CDL by cohort, school, or district if the health situation warrants the change.

We greatly appreciate your patience and understanding as we have worked to keep students and staff safe, while providing them the best education possible through CDL. We know this has been difficult for everyone and we will work as quickly and efficiently as possible to facilitate a transition back to our physical schools when the metrics allow this. I will be updating our **Stages for Reentry to School** page located on the district website to better understand the new metrics in the coming days.

Respectfully,

Jeff Leo
Superintendent