

Greetings to all:

During this time of dealing with the coronavirus and all that has meant for our community, I am sure that many of you are wondering about what school will look like come September and the “new” school year. I hope to give you a better understanding of what will be happening, while telling you that the full details of how everything will work are not all figured out yet. Nevertheless, school is scheduled to re-open in September to a mode that will satisfy all the requirements of the State Dept. of Health (DOH) and the guidance of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). There is no option for schools to operate contrary to the laws and regulations being set up for us in our continuing struggle to cope with the coronavirus threat, nor do we want to operate in violation of same.

The mandates being set up for all schools are clearer now than before, but the specific details for individuals and families is still being worked out—the state is mandating certain parameters, and the schools are responsible to implement them. Local control is limited by the state departments of health and Labor and industries. It is expected that ALL school districts in Washington State will have to offer some version of remote learning to address the health needs of us all while schooling must continue, even if we also offer other options.

In brief, one mandate we MUST follow is that everyone—teachers, staff, administrators and students must all wear facemasks while in school—this is a Department of Health regulation to deal with the coronavirus. Handwashing and sanitizing will be frequent and encouraged both by staff and students.

Another mandate is that there must be a 6 feet of separation rule at all times to help reduce the transmission of disease, such that the schools will be arranging classrooms and spaces all around the schools with identifying spaces and zones of separation. It is expected that naturally there will be moments when the 6-foot separation cannot be maintained, but these times will be minimized as much as possible. This zone restriction for all schools will impact the nature of how many students can occupy a classroom, a commons, a gymnasium, and the like. It will cause schools to have to create ways to meet the spatial separation that will likely mean not all students can be in school at the same time, and this leads to...

...not every student is expected to be coming back to campus. This is where there is much room for parents and families to work with their schools to come up with the best and safest ways to meet the mandates. It may be a family does not want their student/s to be at school because of virus concerns, and that will be managed as necessary with all parties using various forms of distance learning, online instruction, alternative times for attendance, and the like. It may mean things I cannot predict at this time, but there is room for creativity in solving this for our students and families. The point is that the schools can and will work with families and students to create a viable solution to learning that does not violate the need to be safe in this coronavirus crisis. This part of the DOH and OSPI guidelines is specifically meant to allow for and encourage parents and families to work with their schools to find a best solution for their students.

If you would like to see the above information and more stated more clearly and, in more detail, please check out the link below to a video of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Chris Reykdal, explaining in 12 minutes how school opening in the state this fall will look.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WotQhMrVzZw&feature=youtu.be>

Supt. Reykdal answers questions about masks, physical distancing, remote learning, and whether ALL schools will open back up in the fall.



[Supt. Reykdal answers questions from the public about going back to school in the fall - YouTube](#)

On June 11, 2020, OSPI released guidance that lays a framework for schools to begin planning what their return to school in the fall looks like. In this video, Superintendent Chris Reykdal reviews ...

www.youtube.com

...meantime, please stay safe and “wash your hands often!” Your health is my health is our children’s health as well.

Art Wightman
Director District 1
North Mason School District