



August 3, 2020

Dear Rainier School District Families and Community,

Let me begin by thanking the staff, parents, and community for such a warm welcome as I step into my new role as Interim Superintendent at Rainier School District #13. While this is a very challenging time, it has been incredibly reassuring to have everyone's support while we navigate these uncharted waters.

You may have seen that during our July 28 board meeting, a proposal to reopen both in-person instruction and virtual learning was presented. This was on the same day that Governor Brown presented the "[Ready Schools, Safe Learners: Community COVID-19 Metrics](#)". The Oregon Department of Education has studied those countries who have managed to reopen school buildings once infection rates had declined and there was on-demand testing. Because we continue to see escalating infection rates, this pandemic is not yet under control to the extent that it is safe to reopen schools.

Following the directive provided by Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon Health Authority, **I am very sorry to announce that Rainier School District will begin the 2020-21 school year in Comprehensive Distance Learning (CDL)**. I know this comes as unwelcome news to many but please know that I have taken all of the feedback I have received in our last parent survey to heart. I will be leading the Rainier staff in developing an improved and redesigned learning platform that will strive to meet the needs of ALL students while understanding the challenges of limited technology and internet.

When redesigning our CDL, I will use the expertise I gained from serving as a principal at a large online school. This week I am conducting parent, student, staff, and leadership team focus groups to incorporate the positive components of Rainier's virtual learning platform, while improving on those areas that may not have met your child's needs. Additionally, our team will continue planning for reopening with a program that will provide parents a choice of virtual or in-person learning. Unfortunately, providing options will not be available until we meet state and county metrics.

It is by belief that our students need consistency, therefore, unless there is a change prior to the first day of school, students will begin Comprehensive Distance Learning on **September 14** and we will review county and state data for a possible in-person reopening on November 9. We will constantly analyze the data and make shifts cautiously and thoughtfully. To ensure the best possible learning platform, our teachers will undergo professional development focused on virtual instruction beginning September 2, which will delay the start of school one week. For clarification purposes, the following timeline has been provided:

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| September 2, 2020 | Teachers return to work for professional development |
| September 14, 2020 | First day of school for students (CDL) |
| October 19, 2020 | Review state and county cases/positivity rates |
| November 9, 2020 | First day of hybrid (virtual and/or in-person) ONLY IF we meet state and county metrics for three weeks |

Let me assure you the decision to begin the 2020-21 school year is not one we have taken lightly. As educators, we prefer to see your children's faces in person and know that is your preference. Please know that we take the safety of you, your child(ren), and our staff very seriously and look forward to a safe and healthy reopening. As we conclude the last month of summer break, I invite you to watch for information on a parent and student focus group. Those groups will be virtual and will provide me an opportunity to get to know you, hear about how we can meet your student's needs in CDL, and begin a process of hearing your voice as we initiate a strategic plan.

Thank you for your patience as we know plans are subject to change. Additionally, thank you for understanding and doing your part to keep Rainier safe and healthy! It is my hope that we will be able to meet in-person very soon!

Your partner in education,

Dr. Hatrick
Interim Superintendent