

August 11, 2020

To: Seaside School District Board of Directors

From: Susan Penrod, Superintendent

Subject: Reopening Schools This Fall

Our school district and community are experiencing the many effects of the COVID 19 pandemic, which include physical, economic, social, and emotional ramifications, to name a few. These are difficult times, and uncertainty causes extra stress for our families. School districts across the country are making decisions on whether to open schools to in-person classes, or begin the year with distance learning. As your Superintendent, my number one priority is the health and safety of our students, staff, and community.

After ending this past school year with distance learning, we began working as a team to plan bringing students back in the building this fall. Using supporting documents from the Oregon Department of Education (ODE), Oregon Health Authority (OHA), and the Governor's Office, we began building draft hybrid models for K-12 students that focused on our guiding principles of:

- Keeping all students, staff, and families safe
- Bringing students back into the building for instruction
- Remaining focused on caring, connection, and wellness

These draft reopening plans were presented to our Community Planning Team on July 1. We received feedback from this 39 member team, which included teachers, classified staff, parents, students, administrators, and many members from our community.

Even with the best laid plans prepared and ready to go, today we are in a very different situation. On July 27, 2020, Governor Kate Brown released the state and county metrics for reopening schools. These metrics include the following requirements:

Clatsop County metrics– must be met three weeks in a row:

- 10 or fewer positive cases per 100,000 population in the preceding 7 days
- 5% or fewer positive tests in Clatsop County in the preceding 7 days

– AND –

State metric must be met three weeks in a row:

- Test positivity rate of 5% or less in the preceding 7 days

The following data is a summary of our county and state data to date:

- Clatsop County – School Re-opening Metrics;
 - Case rate per 100,000: (equal or less than 10 for in person instruction)
 - Week of 7/5 – 10.2 (+0.3)
 - Week of 7/12 – 17.8 (+0.4)
 - Week of 7/19 – 15.3 (+0.4)
 - Week of 7/26 – 30.5
 - Percent positive rate: (equal or below 5.00% for in person instruction)
 - Week of 7/5 – 2.3%
 - Week of 7/12 – 2.2%
 - Week of 7/19 – 1.6% (+1.0%)
 - Week of 7/26 – 5.6%
- Oregon
 - 425,759 (4.69% *cumulative* positive test rate, increasing from 3.2 in early June)
 - Seven day rolling average positive test rate – 6.5% (OHA recorded a single day 4.1% positive rate for 8/5)

At this time, these numbers surpass the conditions to reopen schools in person. Unless the county sees significant modification in its case load for three consecutive weeks all schools in our county must plan to move to comprehensive distance learning.

It is my recommendation that we begin school as scheduled on September 14, 2020 with a 100% Comprehensive Distance Learning model for the first six weeks of school. During the week of October 26, 2020, I recommend we review the county and state data to determine if we see declining trends in both our number of positive cases per 100,000 and our test positivity rate. This will give us the information we need to make an informed decision about reopening our buildings or continuing with distance learning. Seaside School District is committed to bringing students back to school on-site when it is safe to do so.