

Rainier School District #13

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November 15, 2020,

Dear Families, Students, Staff, and Community,

Over the past few weeks, Oregonians have endured many changes presented by Governor Brown, Oregon Department of Education (ODE), and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA). On October 30, 2020, Governor Brown announced the new metrics for reopening schools and the revised [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#) guidance. Immediately, in response to this announcement, the Rainier School District began planning for a slow rollout for hybrid learning (beginning with Pre-K-3).

Since the announcement on October 30, Columbia County has seen a steady increase in rates impacting our county and we have also seen our highest one-day case rate all year. On November 9 we saw an increase from 64.5 to 98.6 cases per 100,000 in Columbia County. In response to this increase, Rainier School District has collaborated with Columbia County Public Health and have agreed that a partial, hybrid reopening would not be in our students' or staffs' best interest at this time. It is anticipated that when the data becomes available late Monday, we will be above 100 cases per 100,000 which prevents us from beginning hybrid instruction.

Our beliefs about the importance of Rainier students learning on campus has NOT changed. We will finalize the planning for hybrid and limited in-person instruction this week but we will continue to provide comprehensive distance learning while we monitor COVID-19 case rates in our county. Rather than to predict when we will be able to provide hybrid instruction, we will continue to communicate with families, staff, and our community and as soon as we have a window to reopen.

I think it is worth mentioning that this delay in reopening hybrid instruction is based on the data provided by OHA and in response to the Ready Schools, Safe Learners guidance. The Governor, in her press conference on November 13 stated that the announcement did not apply to schools. Our amazing staff are fully committed to continuing to provide our students with rigorous and improved CDL instruction, access to teachers, staff, and materials on campus, and access to nutritious meals delivered to your home.

I know the delay of hybrid instruction may come as disappointing news but I assure you, we will continue to make it our goal to get students on campus as soon as we can. In the meantime, some small groups of students may be invited to participate in limited in-person instruction based on academic need.

As always, remember that we are all going through this together. I strongly encourage everyone to continue to practice social distancing, wear face coverings, and help to keep everyone safe. Only through increased safety practices will we see rates decrease in our county which will allow our students to come back to school.

With great respect,

Dr. Joseph Hattrick
Superintendent