

Educating Public Health

The Lived Experiences School Districts Located Within the NEWESD 101 Region Through the Provision of *In-person* Education During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Superintendents of the districts listed below have made the time to describe data/stories from their districts around the guiding questions outlined below:

- What students you have back in school, and at what points in the year they returned to school.
- Define the model that has been in place at different points in the year, and that is now in place (that is – details of hybrid, schedules, amount of time in the day...all that stuff)
- Number of students in classes at the various grade levels, and what percentage of your overall enrollment is now “in school” and for what amount of time.
- Provide detail of the number of cases you have experienced (students and staff) and include any in school transmission that has been contact-traced (and conversely, describe when cases did not originate or spread in school).
- Describe in detail all the other mitigation efforts (NTI's) you assure (and know that, from public health perspective, MASKING is and remains a very key expectation and an effective mitigation practice)
- Include qualitative data and perspectives/lessons learned from your district – in other words, TELL YOUR STORY.

Benge

Colfax

Diocese of Spokane Catholic Schools

Liberty

Lind-Ritzville Cooperative Schools

Loon Lake

Mead

Medical Lake

Newport

Orchard Prairie

Republic

Riverside

Rosalia

Selkirk

Sprague

Valley

Washtucna

The data and the stories that are shared, individually and collectively, demonstrate that schools and districts have been careful in following mitigation strategies that have resulted in students having the opportunity to learn *in school*, *absent significant spread of the virus*.

We request consideration for some flexibility with current physical distancing requirements in order to make it possible for all enrolled students to benefit from in-person education, as planning for the 2021-22 school year continues.

Benge School District/Bob Moore, Superintendent

The pandemic has assuredly caused a lot of unrest for many – if not all – districts this past year. The DOH's guidelines, though, have established some consistent ground rules to ensure the safe return to schools for our students. We have been held to the highest standards for safety: six foot distances between desks, regular hand washing, masks at all times while inside the building(s), regular cleaning and sanitizing, and improved school and bus ventilation. Covid-19 screening has become a regular occurrence each day for our students and staff, and we are required to also trace our cases. These protocols have become the new normal. We've done all of this to ensure we can still teach our students and that they have the resources to learn.

For some, this has meant part-time attendance at school while others have been fortunate to be in-person from the get-go. At Benge, we began in-person for K-3 with a hybrid model for our 5-6 grade students. Our fifth graders attended school on Mondays and Wednesdays while the sixth graders attended on Tuesdays and Thursdays. (We have two additional students who will not return until masks are no longer mandated, according to their parents.) This was our model until February. We resumed in-person learning for everyone on February 1, 2021.

As Covid-19 made a mark on society nationwide and even in some of our local regions, Benge was largely spared. We had one staff case last summer. In the handling of this, we decided to postpone our year's commencement by one additional week. Since September until now, we have had zero additional confirmed cases, although we shut our doors for the first week in January when there was a presumed case. This was never tested or confirmed, but we handled this the same internally as if it was.

On the student side, we had zero cases throughout this pandemic until February 2. This confirmed case came just one day after resuming to full-time learning. The Adams County Health Department decided to halt our in-person schooling due to our transportation situation, which allows for us to transport students without maintaining the six foot guidelines that the school building is required to keep. Just this week, we were able to get back to school again. We have a total of seven days this year when everyone has been together for school.

In some ways, it's not surprising that Benge has had some cases because a few families (three) come from Ritzville, but four others come from farms/ranches and one from Benge. For anyone who has ever been to our area, they'd understand that few places in WA are as remote or as far from other cities/towns as Benge is. All that remains in Benge itself are a few lonely elevators, a scale house to weigh harvest trucks in and out, a small community church, a small fire station, about 10 homes, and of course, our school. One might say the playground is the busiest part of town. The ranches and farms are scattered, and in many ways, their own "town." For many farm families, these farms settlements hold three generations in separate homes. These people live lives far away from the hustle and bustle of the small towns here locally, save the occasional trip to the grain warehouse to check on their stockpiles, check the grain prices, or pick up a few groceries. For the most part, they are "quarantined" in their lifestyle. Covid-19 has changed very little for them.

Our school is unlike almost every other school in the state. We're small. We have 15 students in K-6. There are two in kindergarten, four in first grade, one in second grade, one in third grade, zero in fourth grade, two in fifth grade, and five in sixth grade. We're remote. One cannot even purchase a pop in Benge. There are no police and no stores. The closest restaurant is about a half hour away, which is in the same community where I live. Yet, in spite of all of our differences, we adhere to the same rules and guidelines that everyone else does. It's just easier to treat everyone equally rather than equitably. It makes more sense to people who make decisions for larger, more densely populated areas to close down whole schools, towns, or states or make rules that everyone must adhere to. The argument is "for the betterment of all." But that doesn't always make the most sense, particularly for places like Benge. We're not oblivious either. We understand the virus, like all viruses, doesn't discriminate or care who you are or where you live.

We would like to see our region move to three foot distances between student desks. The science has proven that schools have almost no transmission rates of the virus. The reason is less about the distances and more about the masks, which have definitely reduced illnesses. We have never had a more healthy population of students at Benge. Absences have been reduced significantly due to our diligence to wear masks. Even with

the higher threshold of no symptoms at school, our school has still had great attendance. We will continue to expect all staff and students to wear masks until the science proves it's safe to not wear them any longer.

Sitting on the Benge bus closer than six feet apart did nothing to put others in danger. However, it did ensure our school closure due to the closer-than-six-feet proximity, per the DOH's guideline when we did have a positive case. It makes sense that if larger schools within our region are now practicing and playing sports, all while athletes are protected with masks, it seems that lessening the distances of our desks can't be seen as high risk so long as the students and staff remain vigilant about the mask rule. After all, athletes are throwing and catching, bumping, serving, and volleying balls that are being handled by all sorts. Yes, the same balls. How is it possible to allow sports teams and players a mulligan on distancing and sanitation practices while expecting schools to do otherwise?

The fact we're still treating all schools the same doesn't make sense. Allow our school leaders to make some decisions for what will work best for each's varying circumstances. Benge is much different even than most small schools in its region. Surely, one would reason that the people who know best about an area are those who live/work there. The science behind Covid-19 has taught us many things. The practices of our school staff and the realities of life in Benge have told us far more.

My hope remains for a move towards relaxing one of the stringent guidelines that was necessary initially, but probably isn't at this point.

Colfax School District/Jerry Pugh, Superintendent

What students you have back in school, and at what points in the year they returned to school.

- Jennings Elementary started the 2020-21 school year with full-time, in-person learning. Approximately 8 students are being served through remote learning.
- Colfax Jr/Sr High School began the 2020-21 school year with a distance learning model. Each student was assigned a Chromebook and class schedule. Instruction took place every week day except for Wednesdays, which were designated for prep time, student tutoring and professional development.
- In mid-October, Colfax Jr/Sr High School moved to a hybrid model of learning. Students were divided into 2 groups - group A and group B. Group A, students with a last name beginning with A through L, received in-person instruction on Mondays and Tuesdays. Group B, students with a last name beginning with M through Z, were in the building on Thursdays and Fridays for instruction. On Wednesday of each week, teachers met with their advisory students and offered tutoring. This allowed custodial staff the time to thoroughly clean the building in preparation for the next group of students to arrive.
- Colfax Jr/Sr High School transitioned to full-time in-person learning for all students five days a week on February 1, 2021.

Number of students in classes at the various grade levels, and what percentage of your overall enrollment is now "in school" and for what amount of time.

All district students are attending school full time for 5 days a week. We have a significant number of families that are choosing to homeschool their students until the COVID case numbers are drastically reduced. At the beginning of the school year, our district enrollment was down approximately 30 FTE from the previous year; however some of those students have returned for in-person learning throughout the school year. In addition, we have accepted several choice transfer students from a neighboring school district, though it is believed that when the neighboring district returns to full-time in-person instruction, a majority of those students will return to their resident district. The district budgeted for 540 FTE; thus far, our yearly average is approximately 515 FTE.

Provide detail of the number of cases you have experienced (students and staff) and include any in school transmission that has been contact-traced (and conversely, describe when cases did not originate or spread in school).

Colfax School District has seen 52 positive cases – 12 staff and 40 students. We had one outbreak with an athletic team earlier in the school year that spread between 8 students and 1 staff member. The remaining cases have all occurred outside of the school, with a majority from parents being infected and bringing the virus into their home.

Describe in detail all the other mitigation efforts (NTI's) you assure (and know that, from public health perspective, MASKING is and remains a very key expectation and an effective mitigation practice)

Colfax School District is vigilant in following these mitigation standards:

- Face masks are required for all students and staff.
- All students and staff complete health attestations daily.
- High risk staff work remotely.
- Added PPE is available for students and staff who need/want it.
- Nursing staff are vigilant in checking on staff and students who present symptoms during the school/work day.
- We contract for 1 FTE of nursing time. Nurses are in charge of all contact tracing and making contact with families.
- Classrooms and buses maintain and follow seating charts.
- Cafeteria seating and expectations have been modified to ensure social distancing at the junior/senior high school.
- Students eat breakfast and lunch in their classrooms at Jennings Elementary School.
- Proper student hygiene is a constant focus.
- Ventilation has been increased.
- Custodial time has been increased at the junior/senior high school to ensure proper disinfecting of high touch areas.

Include qualitative data and perspectives/lessons learned from your district – in other words, TELL YOUR STORY

- The work of the teachers and staff in Colfax during this extremely difficult time has been nothing short of AMAZING. They have poured their hearts into this work and have given heroic service to our students and the community.
 - Throughout the summer months prior to the 2020-21 school year, teachers worked hard to improve the delivery of our distance learning platform. They not only attended trainings, they worked throughout the summer months revamping lessons to be more effective in the distance learning model.
 - K-6 grade teachers had approximately one week to prepare for a transition to in-person learning after the district received late notice from the county health department that we could do so.
 - Until we transitioned to the hybrid model in October, secondary teachers continued to focus on the distance learning delivery model and made incredible strides in improving their instruction and in trying different ways to reconnect with their students.
 - Students in grades 7-12 continued with the hybrid learning model until the first of February. It became very clear that students were still not receiving the quality of education they deserved to be ready for post high school pursuits. Our staff, students and parents were strongly advocating for a full return to in-person learning and the Colfax School District Board of Directors listened and had robust discussions as to what is BEST for the students.
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- Local data told us that almost 100% of COVID issues were coming from outside of the school setting. Other than the small outbreak earlier in the year with an athletic team, we have seen very little, to no, transference in the schools. This reinforced the science we were seeing and reading about. School is the safest place for our students.
 - We are fortunate in Colfax to have just finished a significant remodel of our secondary school. Most of our classrooms are able to follow social distancing guidelines of 6 feet, and larger classes are utilizing the larger learning spaces we have available.
 - Teachers, staff and students have done a magnificent job of following protocols. It is evident by how COVID numbers continue to decrease, even though we are fully back to in-person learning.
 - We have yet to have a single person show any kind of COVID symptoms after being quarantined following exposure. This leads us to conclude the amount of time required to quarantine after possible exposure is too long. We are losing valuable instructional time with our students and staff as we follow current quarantine guidelines.
 - We are now at that critical point of budgeting for next year. As families begin to return to the schools because they see it is safe to do so, more space and staffing will be necessary to accommodate the added students IF we are required to continue with the 6-foot social distancing rule. Schools are the safest place for our students to be AND in-person learning is where we do our best work. When not in school, students are socially gathering and, I can promise, are NOT following established COVID protocols.
 - Student mental health is of great concern and the mental health of parents is a growing concern. Having students back with us will alleviate a tremendous social, emotional and mental burden on our students, their parents and our staff. It is the right thing to do and, more importantly, it is the SAFEST thing to do.

I appreciate this opportunity to provide the Colfax story to you. If we all continue to “lean in” on this issue I am confident our students, their families and our staff will rise to the task of providing a world class education once again.

Diocese of Spokane Catholic Schools/Katie Rieckers, Director of Catholic Schools

Catholic Schools want students and educators to feel comfortable and safe returning and working within school environments. We identified early in the year solutions that make transitions to and from remote continuous learning and a return to some form of in-person instruction, as seamless as possible. With the understanding that different systems require different solutions, we explored a number of scheduling models and instructional considerations that are used to fit the needs of each school community. Modifying school schedules to account for lost instructional time and to ensure ongoing health and safety efforts, such as social distancing is of paramount importance. Restructuring how we operate schools safely allowed students to primarily learn on-campus.

Some requirements and guidance for Catholic schools are different than those of the public schools. While the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has provided guidance for the public schools, the Catholic schools adhere to the requirements and mandates from the Department of Health (DOH) and State Board of Education. All safety protocols are strictly adhered to within our Catholic schools.

1. What students are back in school and at what point in the year did they return?

Number of students in classes at the various grade levels, and what percentage of your overall enrollment is now “in school” and for what amount of time.

Schools began the academic year using a phase-in approach to on-campus learning five days weekly for Pre-school – 2nd grade. Schools phased in additional grade levels throughout the fall and into the winter. Grade level classes maintain approximately 15 students per room.

Catholic Schools within Diocese of Spokane	Current grades on campus	Number of students	Final phase in date
All Saints- Spokane	Pre-8	343	November 30
Assumption- Spokane	Pre-8	218	January 4
Cataldo- Spokane	Pre-8	338	January 19
St. Aloysius- Spokane	Pre-4 5 days, 5-8 3 days M,W,F	391	March 15 - 5th-8th Five days a week
St. Charles- Spokane	Pre-8	122	September 8
St. John Vianney- Spokane	Pre-8	132	November 16
St. Mary- Spokane	Pre-8	227	January 4
St. Thomas More- Spokane	Pre-8	243	January 4
Trinity- Spokane	Pre-8	181	January 19
GASB-Colton	K-6	20	August 31, 2020
Holy Family-Clarkston	Pre-7	128	August 26, 2020
St. Patrick-Pasco	Pre-8	157	September 2, 2020
Assumption & DeSales- Walla Walla	Pre-6, 7-12 th	276	January 11

2. Define the model that has been in place at different points in the year, and that is now in place (that is – details of hybrid, schedules, amount of time in the day)

All schools meet social distancing protocols of 6 feet. Within this requirement, most school facilities accommodate for face to face instruction for Kindergarten through 8th grade with creative uses of space.

Many schools use the library, computer lab, and multi-purpose room as additional classroom space. Classes are split if necessary to accommodate larger class sizes, which is not conducive for optimal learning nor teaching.

As schools phased in more grades, some used a hybrid model of instruction. The goal is to provide face to face instruction for all students; however, until social distancing restrictions lessen some grade levels use a blended learning hybrid model.

If classes are required to go remote, schools transition to continuous remote learning. Synchronous (online class meetings and teacher office hours) and asynchronous (direct instruction through recorded or livestream videos) will be employed. Schools allow for families the option of remote learning if they deem that necessary for their children.

3. Provide detail of the number of cases you have experienced (students and staff) and include any in school transmission that has been contact-traced (and conversely, describe when cases did not originate or spread in school).

With 2,352 students on campus, we have had a total of 102 cases within 6 months from September 21st and February 26th, with no known transmissions occurring in school. That is less than 4% of our school staff and students. Our cases are trending lower each week. Of the 102 positive COVID cases, 17 of the cases were faculty and staff.

4. Describe in detail all the other mitigation efforts (NTI's) you assure (and know that, from public health perspective, MASKING is and remains a very key expectation and an effective mitigation practice)

Schools work closely with their regional health district to abide by the safety protocol required by the Department of Health. We mandate masks for school personnel and students, conduct multiple handwashing sessions daily and other hygiene protocols, adhere to daily attestation and health checks, sanitize according to COVID best practice and limit visitors on campus. We practice the 6th social distancing requirements which has prevented some families from attending on campus due to the classroom space/student ratio.

The 6th social distancing requirement is negatively impacting our schools. We do not know the long-term consequence of COVID nor the long-term effects for students removed from teachers, their student peers, and the best practices classroom instruction affords. While we have focused the majority of our efforts on successfully mitigating the health risks involved in providing in-person instruction this year, the challenge of delivering high quality, differentiated instruction has not gone away. In fact, the challenge has increased as we are dealing with the fallout of students' vastly different experiences during the shutdown and phased-in reopening. Differentiating instruction is absolutely crucial to meeting students' individual needs, and one of the best research-based methods for focusing on skill acquisition is small group instruction. While maintaining our mask requirement, our cohorts, and continuing to use desk shields and increased sanitation procedures, we need to be able to move students closer than 6^{ft} to facilitate targeted skills-based instruction.

As experts in the field of education, and after reviewing many months' worth of localized data, we know that the benefit to our students from being on campus for learning will go far in mitigating learning loss and emotional discourse, as well as provide much needed relief to our families. We humbly request the consideration for reducing the distance required between students during class time instruction for a more optimal learning environment as well as more students learning on campus.

Liberty School District/Brett Baum, Superintendent

At Liberty School District, we started the 2020-21 school year, with all students working remotely on September 10th. Our opening enrollment was 523.41 and has fallen to 515.00 on the February count. We planned on 539 to start the year. Our instructional plan from the beginning was to transition from remote to a Hybrid A/B schedule on September 21st. On that date, we were one of the few schools not only in our region but also across the state, who began bringing all students, into the building in grades K-12 for face-to-face instruction. In our hybrid, the "A" students were assigned to come to school on Mondays and Tuesdays while the "B" students were assigned to attend school on Thursday and Fridays. Wednesdays were remote instruction days so that teachers with remote students could have more time to focus on those students and prepare the remote lessons needed.

Many of our special needs students were scheduled to attend in-person 4 days a week from the beginning. As time went on, we continued to assess and check on all of our students. Those who seemed to be struggling more were also offered to attend in-person 4 days a week.

Liberty offered two types of remote learning. One offering was for students to work remotely from home, 5 days a week interacting with their Liberty SD classroom teacher(s). The other option was for families to enroll with Edgenuity Instructional Services. The students attend the Edgenuity IS classes remotely, working only with Edgenuity certified teachers. Within our school district, Internet connectivity can be spotty. In June, I was able to work out a program with T-Mobile who would supply 100 Internet hotspots to Liberty. They waived all connection fees and we would simply have to pay the monthly service fee of \$20 per month for 1 year on each unit activated. While the T-Mobile units did not work in all areas of the district, they were an aid to many families and all 100 were issued.

In preparation of needing online resources. Liberty contracted with Edgenuity over the summer. The in-district offerings, where our teachers would provide instruction using Edgenuity curriculum came in two forms. Full curriculum is offered to grades 6-12 and in grades K-5, teachers had access to a large offering of supplementary lessons and materials. While not all staff used the Edgenuity program fully, it was a source of curriculum and training that was needed in order to start the school year. Edgenuity also offered Instructional Services as mentioned above. The cost for the whole Edgenuity program for curriculum and training at Liberty was roughly \$25,000 for the year. The Instructional Services where students worked with an Edgenuity teacher was an additional \$1750 (approx..) per semester per student.

In November, we hired a third Kindergarten teacher so that we could divide the 44 students into three classes. By doing so, it allowed us to have the Kindergarten attend school 5 days a week. We then began planning the roll out of bringing more grades of students back to school daily. After winter break, our 1st grade returned to 4 day a week in-class instruction with Wednesday remaining a remote day so that the teachers with full time remote students would have the time to plan, prepare and work individually with those students. In the weeks that followed, we added more grades attending 4 days a week. On February 8th, we had all classes in grades K-6 attending at least 4 days a week. In each of these classrooms, we are able to place up to 20 students, socially distanced at least 6 feet apart.

Liberty school district on Monday March 1st saw our remaining grades, 7-12 return to classes 4 days a week. We are hoping to be able to offer classes K-12, 5 days a week later this spring. We are able to bring the secondary students back by using a satellite or overflow classroom plan. With this plan, classes that have more students than seats during individual classes will assign overflow students to the HS cafeteria. Once there, these students will use their Chromebooks to login and attend class virtually. Teachers will rotate which students go to the cafeteria so that the same students are not being sent there repeatedly and inequitably. With 6 foot spacing in the secondary classes, depending on the room size, most rooms can only fit between 16-20 students.

At the beginning of the year when we moved to the Hybrid schedule, in order to accommodate the needs of remote students and schedules, our traditional bell/time schedules needed to be shifted a little. This shift had the schools releasing and sending buses taking students home 45-60 minutes earlier than the traditional bell schedule of the past. This extra time was made so that remote secondary students had assigned times when they could check-in with their teachers to receive help or assistance that they may need. On March 1st, Liberty

School District reverted to the traditional school day time schedule with the EJH building running from 8:20-2:55 and the HS running from 8:14-3:05.

As we began the hybrid model and brought students back for face-to-face instruction, we made sure that current safety rules, mandates and guidelines were followed. We set in place safe practices for staff and students in efforts to keep the virus from transmitting or being spread in the schools. This meant that all student seats were spaced at least 6' apart. Shields/partitions were placed in all offices. Check-in tables and procedures were set for all entrances where students/parents would be entering the building. These practices include attestation sheets/cards for all entering the building. Masks were required for entry into the building, temperature taken and documented on the attestation sheets. Hand sanitizer is available at check-in table for use as people enter the building and around the building for use during the day. Students are given a squirt of sanitizer when they arrive in the morning and when they come in from recess. Procedures were set to increase hand washing of students as well.

Students who come to school ill or become ill while at school are isolated and kept comfortable until a parent/guardian can come to pick them up. To date, we still have not had any "In School Transmission" of COVID.

While we have not had any "In School Transmission" of COVID, we were forced to close our elementary/junior high building for a two-week period and conduct all classes remotely. On the week of January 18th, our school moved to Level 2 as we had a family of three who were found to be COVID positive. Since all three members attended/worked in three different classrooms that meant we had at least 10% of our classrooms with a COVID positive case. Later that week, we had two family members and another single staff member become COVID positive, which moved us to Level 3 requiring a closure of the building to students.

Liberty COVID Statistics:

EJH laboratory confirmed positive cases:

Students- 14

Staff members- 5

In-school transmission- 1 staff to staff case. Unknown where one staff member caught the virus but was in a room with a positive staff member where both were masked and distanced at least 6'. SRHD said to count it as an in-school transmission.

Out of school transmission- 18 cases

HS laboratory confirmed positive cases:

Students- 6

Staff members- 2

In-school transmission- 1 case of staff to staff (occurred in a carpool on the way to work between two staff who work in different buildings so did not occur within the building)

Out of school transmission- 7 cases

Bus Garage:

Laboratory confirmed positive cases in staff- 2

In-building transmission- None

Our mitigation efforts have been extensive. All persons entering the building MUST wear a mask. In addition, temperatures are taken and documented on an attestation sheet. Students have attestation cards which are completed by their parent on a daily basis which they turn in as they enter the building. Student temperatures are taken at that time as well. Students in grades 7-12 may fill out their own attestation card. Any student with a temperature of 100.4 is isolated from others until a parent can pick them up. A temperature of 99-100.3 results in the student checked again 30 minutes later to determine if they have a fever or were just overheated because of hat or jacket.

Again, Liberty has not had any in school transmission of COVID among students at school or from adult to student.

Lind-Ritzville Cooperative Schools/Don Vanderholm, Superintendent

We have been serving between 504 and 525 students this year at **Lind-Ritzville Cooperative Schools** in a variety of ways this school year.

The first two weeks of the year were set aside for teachers to meet with each student and parent to explain the Remote Learning Plan. During this time students were directed in learning activities. At the conclusion of the two-week conferences, student learning proceeded as follows:

Model 1= All remote, with on-campus learning option in cohort groups of 5 or less- 2hrs/dayX2days/wk. (Fridays are always= Remote learning support; struggling learners, PD/Collab)

9/14- PK-3 students, and those K-12 students most-at-risk

9/28- grades 4-5; extended hrs for K-12 at-risk students

10/19- grades 6-12

Model 2= All remote, with on-campus learning option in cohort groups of 5 or less A/B schedule- 2.5hrs/dayX2days/wk.

9/28- PK-3

10/5= grades 4-5

11/02= grades 6-12

Model 3= All remote, with on-campus learning option in cohort groups of Hybrid A/B, all dayX2 days/wk.

10/19- PK-5

11/16- grades 6-12

Model 4= All remote with on-campus learning all dayX4days/wk.

11/02- PK-5 (in cohorts)

02/16- 6-12 (no cohorting)

Moving forward

The decision for moving forward to the next model was based on the following criteria:

- limited to no COVID+ cases among students and staff
- zero on-campus transmissions
- limited number of CLI cases (these numbers have been consistently low)
- Ability to track, monitor close-contacts and quarantines

Sometimes we paused if community rates were high; at other times, we did not. Our local health director was generally supportive of each movement though quite concerned with the last move on 02/16 when the community rate had risen to its highest level of 811/100K. The current rate has dropped to 83/100K. Our last COVID+ case at the 6-12 level was on 01/04.

COVID cases

- There has been a total of 14 COVID+ cases among students and staff. There is currently no evidence of on-campus transmission

Student participation

- 85% of our students are back full-time. The other 15% are choosing to continue as Remote Learners.

Mitigation Strategies

- We have implemented and held firmly to all of the recommended mitigation measures including: attestations/daily screening, masking, social distancing, limiting staff gatherings/in-person meetings, increased building hygiene/student hygiene, limiting bathroom use, assigned seating at lunch, and cohort separation at recess. With grades 6-12 moving to Model 4 at a time when community rates were high, we required the wearing of N95 masks as an additional precaution.

We believe that our careful and steady approach has allowed us to bring back students safely while also protecting staff. Our COVID/Safety team meets weekly to review mitigation strategies and protocols, review student/staff health, update guidance as needed, and make recommendations for learning models. Each move forward has been made in consultation with union leaders and teacher/admin leadership teams.

We are very happy having our students on-campus and so impressed with how cooperative and patient they have been with all the changes and challenges. They are surely the superstars in all of this and so deserving of every learning opportunity we can provide for them.

Loon Lake School District/Brad Van Dyne, Superintendent

School Opening at Loon Lake School District How 6 Feet of Distance is Unfairly Impacting our Kids

It is obvious that the required 6 feet of physical distance between students is a huge burden for our large districts with middle school and high schools, but the reality is, it's a huge burden for small districts as well.

Loon Lake School District is a small P-6 district with 97 students in our building. Currently, we have opened up face-to-face learning as much as possible. The only thing holding us back is the 6 foot requirement.

Grade	Began Remote	Began Hybrid	Began Full Time
Preschool			9/2/20
Kindergarten	9/2/20	9/21/20	Can't due to 6 foot requirement
1 st	9/2/20	9/21/20	11/30/20
2 nd	9/2/20	9/21/20	11/30/20
3 rd	9/2/20	10/12/20	11/30/20
4 th	9/2/20	10/12/20	Can't due to 6 foot requirement
5 th	9/2/20	10/12/20	11/30/20
6 th	9/2/20	11/2/20	Can't due to 6 foot requirement

Because of the 6 foot rule, half of our kindergarteners, half of our 4th graders, and half of our 6th graders are getting access to 50% of in-person instructional time that their classmates in other grade levels are getting. That is 59 students, which is 61% of our student body. This is unacceptable. Our kids are generally lower performing, as they go home to challenges most of us can't imagine. School is the safest place for them, physically and emotionally.

Easing the 6 feet of distance requirement would double the amount of face-to-face instruction 61% of our students deserve. And we can do it safely.

We have experienced 5 cases of COVID-19 at our school – and NONE of these folks contracted the virus at school. We have had ZERO community spread within our school. We screen everyone who enters our building. We all wear our masks every day, all day. We disinfect constantly. We wash our hands regularly. We keep our distance. All of these factors have led to a safe school environment.

In fact, it is obvious that school is the safest place for kids. Where else are all these mitigation factors performed like clockwork? 6 feet of distance is preventing some of our students from being here regularly, at the safest place for them, and that cannot continue.

Mead School District/Shawn Woodward, Superintendent

The Mead School District was the largest district in the state to open the 2020-21 academic year with in-person instruction offered to students. Since our first day of school on Sept. 21st, students have had the choice of attending either in-person or remotely at all grade levels.

As our district prepared to offer our students and families the option of in-person instruction, we audited the schools' classroom sizes, equipment, furniture, hallways, in-school traffic flow patterns, building entrance possibilities and more to have a complete picture of how we could safely and effectively offer our students in-person instruction. Our district created a COVID Safety Task Force, composed of district operational directors, to create the safety protocols that launched our school year. The Safety Task Force eventually evolved to become our COVID Coordination Committee that meets weekly to review not only current protocols and procedures, but also review requests from our schools, activities and clubs to open their particular offerings to students in a safe manner according to the safety plan and guidance from local and state departments.

To allow for in-person instruction, strict protocols were then put in place including masking by all students and staff all day, social distancing in classrooms and lunch periods, required hand-washing at intervals throughout the day and contact tracing/quarantining with the guidance of the local health officers at the Spokane Regional Health District. To assist with contact tracing, students are required to sit in assigned seating on buses, in classrooms and at lunch periods. In addition, ventilation and air flow was optimized with increased filtration and more frequent air exchange cycles and cleaning and sanitizing efforts were increased with growth in custodial staff.

Our K-5 students attending in-person are in school all five days each week with a maximum of 22 students in a classroom to maintain social distancing. Our 6-12 students who chose an in-person option, attend school on an A/B hybrid schedule with the A Cohort in buildings on Monday and Wednesday, the B Cohort in buildings on Tuesday and Thursday, and all students working remotely on Fridays. Grades 6-12 have a maximum of 20 students in a classroom, which also allows for desks to be socially-distanced at least six feet apart.

100 percent of our students were offered the option of in-person instruction. We are operating with approximately 75% of our students who chose in person and 25% who chose to receive instruction remotely. These remote options included a virtual learning program for K-5 students and both school-paced and self-paced programs for 6-12 students.

Other mitigation measures include daily health attestations completed online every day by all staff and students, building entrance procedures and second-screening stations, and one-way traffic on each side of hallways inside our schools.

We have seen very minimal in-school transmission of COVID-19. We track, contact-trace and publicize our data daily. Our online dashboard is updated daily at 5 p.m. to keep our staff, students and families informed of current case counts and quarantines in their school communities.

- As of Feb. 23, 2021, we have had 495 positive cases of COVID-19 among staff and students in the District. This has resulted in the quarantine of more than 2,000 staff and students. Through contact tracing, our nursing staff has confirmed only five cases as a result of in-school transmission -- it is important to note that each case has been documented to be the result of improper masking and/or social distancing.

As we have worked through our year and guidance for both local and state officials has changed, our COVID Coordination Committee has continually communicated these changes to students, staff and families through a variety of means, including email, phone calls, website updates, school messages and text messages.

Many changes have come about in early 2021 with updates to activities, including sports, music, performing arts and more. Our COVID Coordination committee reviews proposals from each group as to what their plan would be to keep students safe during their activity. These proposals are required to follow mitigation measures as prescribed by state and local officials, as well as the district Safety Plan.

Our nursing staff also worked with the Spokane Regional Health District to deliver first and second doses of the vaccine to staff members who met the state criteria for eligible people - those over 65, those over 50 living in a multi-generational household and those that work with students who are unmasked due to medical reasons in our Developmental Learning Centers. This vaccination effort equated to about 300 Mead School District staff members, as well as about 60 staff members from neighboring districts Deer Park and Orchard Prairie. Our nursing staff is working with local providers to move quickly on a vaccination clinic for the rest of our workforce as soon as more are eligible based on the state's phases and tiers.

The Mead School District's efforts to safely and effectively deliver instruction through both in-person and remote options have been highly successful. At no time has an entire school been required to close for a quarantine period.

We believe it is in the student's best interest to offer face-to-face instruction to every student everyday. This would require two actions. The first is for all of our willing teachers and staff members to be vaccinated. Secondly, for Governor Inslee, OSPI and the Washington Department of Health to remove the requirement of social distancing. This would allow us to increase our class size and be able to serve every student, every day.

Medical Lake School District/Tim Ames, Superintendent

What students you have back in school, and at what points in the year they returned to school.

Friday, March 13, 2020- The world of education changed on that date for the MLSD, as we had the first certified teacher in Spokane County test positive for Covid 19. The MLSD Board of Directors unanimously supported the indefinite closure of school for the following Monday. We are a district where staff members are shared between 5 buildings and you could trace potential exposure to all of them. This was at the time we knew very little about Covid 19 with the exception of it was deadly. As the superintendent I spent the next two weeks calming our staff, students, families and community members. I had to reassure them that we were going to be as safe as possible. I couldn't have done this without the support of our school nurse, our district and building leadership, the leadership of Dr. Dunn and the leadership of the Spokane Regional Health District, Dr. Lutz and Mark Springer.

March 2020-June 2020 - The MLSD was privileged to receive a Department of Defense STEM grant with priority to have all K-12 students have a one on one device. We were down for 5 days and up and running with a remote learning platform for 1800 students on Monday, March 24, 2020. What was witnessed was an army of volunteer staff members distributing Chromebooks to grades K-5, learning packets and lunches to all of our students. We formed a Covid Response Team command center and met weekly, continuing to do so to this day, to address issues and improve our services to staff, students and families.

We started school on Tuesday, September 8, 2020 with phasing in our most vulnerable students to face to face instruction. Also, our entire staff physically returned to work at that time with the exception of those with underlying conditions. The following groups of students were invited to attend school M-F for 6 hours a day.

- Special education
- 504 students
- Students of poverty
- Students with limited access to connect
- Students who struggled with remote learning in the Spring of 2020
- Students of essential workers
- Students of MLSD staff

Our 2 elementary schools had approximately 60 students each and our middle and high school had approximately 30 students each. Those numbers increased as we were able to identify students via parent request and our ability to improve the protocols allowed us to bring more vulnerable students into our schools. We hired 10 additional para-educators to provide supervision of cohorts and hired 3.5 certified teachers to operate our newly created Connect Plus program with a designed curriculum that students do at their own pace.

Define the model that has been in place at different points in the year, and that is now in place (that is – details of hybrid, schedules, amount of time in the day...all that stuff)

September 8, 2020 - We had three models in place. Our most vulnerable continued to attend face to face this totaled approximately 200 students. We had K-12 students working remotely or with learning packets directly with their teacher 5 days a week totalling approximately 1400 students. We had approximately 200 students enrolled in the Connect Plus program.

October 12, 2020 - We transitioned P-K students to in-person instruction at both of our elementary schools M-F on a traditional scheduled model. Our daily attendance at this time was approximately 200 students at our elementary schools. Our most vulnerable students continued to attend on a daily basis. Grades 1-12 continued with the remote learning or Connect Plus program.

October 26, 2020 - First grade students were invited back for in-person instruction. Raising the daily attendance to 230 at each elementary school. Our most vulnerable students continued to attend on a daily basis. Grades 2-12 continued with the remote learning or Connect Plus program.

November 9, 2020 - January 11, 2021 - We continued the phasing in of grade levels every 2 weeks with the exception of January 11, 2020 as we invited grades 4 and 5 to attend in-person instruction. One elementary school had the capacity to bring back students 5 days a week. This school had space and the opportunity to utilize certified teachers non-classroom teachers to take on a classroom. The other elementary school did not have the space so grades 4 and 5 in that school are doing the A/B hybrid model. Secondary schools continued to offer the three options described above.

February 1, 2021 - Present -Middle School and High Schools students returned to in-person instruction in an A/B hybrid model each have approximately 150 students attending each day for a total of 300 students a week at each school. What was surprising was that 200 students K-12 choose to remain in the Connect Plus program. 100 of those are high school students.

What percentage of your overall enrollment is now “in school” and for what amount of time. 89% of our overall enrollment is “in school” 6 hours a day. Our middle school and high school students are attending 3 90 minutes blocks of instruction with 1.5 of independent learning time. Elementary students are receiving 6 hours of instruction a day.

Provide detail of the number of cases you have experienced (students and staff) and include any in school transmission that has been contact-traced (and conversely, describe when cases did not originate or spread in school). To date we have contact- traced 428 individuals as it relates to potential exposure, Class A & B symptoms, testing results, and timelines for quarantine and returning to school. We had 7 positive covid individuals bring it into school but no transmission at school.

Describe in detail all the other mitigation efforts (NTI's) you assure (and know that, from public health perspective, MASKING is and remains a very key expectation and an effective mitigation practice) - Include qualitative data and perspectives/lessons learned from your district – in other words, TELL YOUR STORY.

We have made every effort to mitigate the spread of covid within our schools. We established a district wide Covid Care Team made up of our special services director, our family military advocate, nursing staff and Director. They meet every Thursday, review our mitigation protocols and endless hours having multiple conversations with the 428 individuals mentioned above. They met the 24 hour goal to have each individual personally contacted. Our director of finance, maintenance and operations work directly with our food service, maintenance and custodial staff to see that PPE is ordered and placed in buildings, assured that areas were disinfected nightly and rooms were sealed cleaned if a covid contact-traced employee or student was in that location.

We followed attestations and screening protocols with fidelity at each site with no exception. Schools were marked with 6ft stickers, posters, and walking directions to prevent any transmission. Schools were well supervised during passing times, recess and lunch. Students were reminded to not gather and keep moving forward. Our parents and students were very responsive to directions and communicated extremely well with schools about a potential exposure.

All of our classrooms and learning spaces met the 65 ft requirement, and students and staff assisted in disinfecting desks, chairs, materials and counters. Door handles were disinfected on a regular basis by our support and custodial staff.

Our food service program delivered meals while schools were closed. Once opened cafeterias were well marked and food was delivered on carts while maintaining safety protocols.

All staff members wear masks as directed and additional layers of PPE were supplied for any individual who requested. Our teachers association partnered with us at every aspect of dealing with mitigation and bringing students back to in-person learning. There was not one instant of hesitation on their part about returning to work and phasing students in to school. They have clearly sent the message they want all students back, all day, five days a week.

In closing, I am extremely proud of our entire staff during what has been the most challenging time ever in the history of modern day schools. Our true character has shined during this time and people have worked hard to meet the needs of our students and families. We want "normal" back and hope the leaders of Washington State who have the authority to make that happen, listen and demonstrate by their actions that we have been heard.

Newport School District/Dr. Dave Smith, Superintendent

ENROLLMENT IMPACTS

In March of 2020, the Newport School District served 1,093 students grades K-12. This last August, before the 2020-21 school year began, our enrollment was down to 965. Despite creating a K-12 remote program staffed by three certificated educators for families who did not want their children educated on-site, which we currently serve 155 students, we still had a significant number of Choice-Out transfers. These parents choose to enroll their children in either established online providers, homeschool their students themselves, or transfer their children to the neighboring school district in Idaho to attend school in-person. You will see in the information below that our school district has served students utilizing a number of modalities due to the fluctuation of positive COVID-19 cases in our community. As we have transitioned from one instructional modality to another, we have served as little as 300 students at one time and to up to 700 students. What we have learned is that we can instruct our students onsite and we can do it safely with little to no COVID-19 transmissions. We have also learned that it is time to reduce the 6-foot physical distancing requirement so we can bring all of our students back to school. If the 6-foot requirement does not change, we anticipate that our enrollment will, again, drop and we know for certain that once again our students will suffer academically.

LEARNING MODALITIES

The Newport School District facilitated the following instructional modalities based on community COVID-19 numbers and recommendations from NorthEast Tri-County Health District.

August 31st - October 5th: All students being served remotely.

October 5th - October 16th: K - 8 All students 5days/wk. 9-12 A/B Hybrid Schedule 4days/wk

October 16th - November 2nd: All students being served remotely.

November 2nd - December 18th: K - 6 A/B Hybrid 5days/wk. 7 - 12 full remote.

January 4th - February 2nd: K - 12 A/B Hybrid 4 days/Wk.

February 2nd - Current: K - 8 All students, 9 - 12 A/B Hybrid 4 days/wk

COUNTERMEASURES TO REDUCE TRANSMISSION

The Newport School District has implemented the following health and safety procedures required for on-site learning as directed in the *Reopening Washington Schools 2020: District Planning Guide*:

- ❖ Face Coverings - students, staff, and guests wear face coverings at all times.
- ❖ Physical distancing - students are seated 6 feet apart in all classrooms and during breakfast and lunch times.
- ❖ Symptom screening - symptomatic screening is conducted daily for students and staff. All staff completes a daily symptomatic checklist via Qualtrics before coming to work. All students must turn in an attestation signed by a parent that they are asymptomatic, or have their temperature checked and complete a symptomatic checklist upon entering the school.
- ❖ Symptomatic rooms - any student who presents with symptoms are taken to a separate room. Parents are notified immediately to retrieve the student. Students who have COVID symptoms are provided the required paperwork and instructions for isolating, quarantining, or getting tested for COVID.
- ❖ COVID Response Teams - each building has a designated COVID response team that tracks close contacts and makes the appropriate communication to parents, staff, and Tri-County Health officials. Precise procedures outline the responsibilities of each team member, along with what is to be communicated to parents and staff. These detailed procedures are outlined on our district website.
- ❖ Cohorting students - K-8 students are placed in specific cohorts to limit virus transmission as well as to allow for contact tracing of any student or staff member who tests positive. High school students (9-12) are placed in cohorts as much as possible, hallway transitions are limited with no access to lockers. The hybrid schedule limits the number of students in the building at one time. Students riding buses must sit in the same seat each day for contact tracing purposes.

- ❖ Hybrid scheduling - hybrid schedules are implemented when necessary. Newport High School would require a hybrid schedule in order to facilitate the physical distancing of students.
- ❖ Phased-in approach - a current phased-in approach is being implemented; K - 6 students are currently on a hybrid A/B schedule with 7-12 students working remotely.

OBSERVATIONS FROM CURRENT ONSITE INSTRUCTION

The Newport School District has had the opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of countermeasures for grades K-12 as students have been served in a number of modalities. While our local community over the past months has seen numbers above 400 cases per 100,000 within our schools **we have not had any staff-to-staff, student-to-staff, staff-to-student, or student-to-student COVID transmissions**. The following is an excerpt from a press release issued by Tri-County Health officials on November 18th regarding observations from current onsite instruction:

Working with schools over the last several months, we have found school districts have implemented countermeasures that are effective in limiting COVID-19 transmission and that staff are well prepared to respond to situations involving staff and students who test positive for COVID-19. In our experiences, there has been close coordination with NETCHD staff and appropriate disease intervention steps taken. In most cases, identification of close contacts, exclusions of those individuals through the quarantine period, and proper notification to parents/staff have been all that is necessary for the school to remain open.

The following list provides observations of our facilitated on-site instruction. Although limited, these observations provide evidence that countermeasures are keeping our students and staff safe:

- Face Coverings - students, staff, and guests have worn face coverings at all times. Students are very good at wearing their masks for long periods of time, even students in our younger grade bands.
- Physical distancing - we are able to facilitate on-site K-12 instruction for all students and provide for physical distancing in classrooms. Students 9-12 are on a hybrid schedule which allows for proper distancing. K-12 students utilized multi-purpose rooms, gyms, and classrooms during breakfast and lunch to ensure physical distancing.
- Symptom screening - symptomatic screening was and is conducted daily for students and staff. One entry is utilized at the high school with multiple entryways at both the middle and elementary school. A majority of our students utilize the attestation forms while those who don't are screened in a quick but thorough process. We have four staff members facilitate the screening at the main entrance to the high school and we have two staff members at each of the three entrances at both the middle and elementary school. Staff utilizes the daily symptomatic checklist via Qualtrics and building principals monitor this process by running a report each morning. The symptom screening is effective by not allowing students to enter the school who present with symptoms. Multiple students have been sent home with parents or sent directly to the symptomatic room which is evidence that staff understands the responsibilities and the importance of keeping symptomatic students out of the buildings.
- Symptomatic rooms - teachers have been very vigilant with students in the classroom and many students who have presented with symptoms during the day have been isolated and sent home. Again, this is evidence that teachers are paying attention and understand their role in eliminating the risk of transmission.
- COVID Response Teams - in the process of facilitating on-site instruction, our NSD COVID Response Teams have appropriately handled symptomatic students, students identified as close contacts, and students and staff that have tested positive for COVID. In every instance, our staff has responded quickly and taken proper action by removing the staff and/or student or kept that staff or student from attending in building. As communicated by Tri-County Health, these actions limit transmission and keep schools open.

- Cohorting students - a great deal of work has been done to place students in cohort groups as well as to ensure these students maintain the same seating arrangements in all classes and all buses.
- Hybrid scheduling - hybrid schedules are implemented when necessary. Newport High School requires a hybrid schedule in order to facilitate proper physical distancing of students.

EVIDENCE SHOWS THAT STUDENTS CAN SAFELY ATTEND SCHOOL

School districts across our region have proven that students and staff can attend school safely. Our district, on a daily basis, will serve over 600 students onsite and we have yet to have a COVID transmission within our schools. Unfortunately, with the 6-foot distancing requirement we will be unable to bring all of our students back onsite. Furthermore, if we continue with the 6-foot requirement, our middle and elementary schools will be forced to go back to a hybrid schedule as we have more of our remote students returning to onsite instruction. Our parents and students cannot experience further setbacks. We are already grappling with the severe learning loss due to our students not having full access to our schools and their teachers.

If we have learned anything, it is the districts, who brought students back to school in August - despite the recommended matrix from the Department of Health, who provided evidence that students can learn onsite safely and ultimately a change in the Department of Health Matrix with a call from the governor to return students to onsite instruction. This simply would not have happened had schools followed DOH's initial Matrix. We need to be allowed to reduce the physical distancing requirements so again, we can prove that students can learn safely within a limited space.

Orchard Prairie School District/Suzanne Savall, Superintendent

1. What students you have back in school, and at what points in the year they returned to school.

Orchard Prairie School District's **kindergarten through 5th graders** have been in-person learning Monday - Thursday since **September 8th**. One first grader has been distance learning since September, and another first grader has been distance learning since October. It is a monument Both families made this decision based on student health concerns. On Fridays, K – 5th grade students work on packets and on-line assignments from our math program. The most at-risk Title I students were offered one hour of remediation in small groups. Our **6th & 7th** graders had distance learning Monday through Thursday and in-person learning every Friday until **February 1st**, when they became full time in-person learners. Orchard Prairie School District currently has had all but two of our 79 **kindergarten through seventh students in school for in-person learning Monday - Thursday, since February 1st**.

2. Define the model that has been in place at different points in the year, and that is now in place (that is – details of hybrid, schedules, amount of time in the day.

- Beginning in September, Orchard Prairie had a hybrid model. Our **K - 5 students** had four days of in-person learning each week. Each grade level of students stayed in one classroom and the teachers for reading, math, PE, and enrichment moved to the classrooms. Students were in class from 8:30 - 3:10. On Fridays, the students had a review packet and assignments in Think Central from the Go Math! Program assigned. Small groups of 1st - 4th grade students were invited in for one hour of remediation or enrichment. There was no transportation offered for these interventions. We did not have all students that had been invited attend this opportunity for learning.
- Our **6th and 7th grade students** began the year having reading, math, and Science assignments listed through Google Classroom and Go Math Think Central on Monday through Thursday mornings. Each afternoon, the students had zoom meetings with their ELA, Science/Social Studies, and math teachers. The students were expected to be logged in by 8:45 for Monday through Thursday.
- Beginning on February 1st, **all K – 7** students have in-person learning Monday – Thursday. By moving the majority of furniture out of classrooms and changing schedules, we were able to continue to following social distancing guidelines, however this did not happen without additional sacrifices of our staff and budget. My teachers are struggling with sharing a classroom with an additional teacher instructing another subject and grade level. We had to hire a half time teacher to teach Science Monday - Thursday in the morning. This of course, is an additional cost to our district. Additionally, a math teacher is now teaching two grades of math at the same time in the same classroom.

3. Number of students in classes at the various grade levels, and what percentage of your overall enrollment is now “in school” and for what amount of time.

K - 8 students
1st grade - 15 students
2nd grade -12 students
3rd grade- 9 students
4th grade - 7 students
5th grade - 9 students
6th grade -11 students
7th grade -10 students

98% of students are now 'in school' four days a week from 8:30 - 3:10. Twenty one students come to school for intervention/enrichment for two hours. Two first grade students are involved in distance learning.

4. Provide detail of the number of cases you have experienced (students and staff) and include any in school transmission that has been contact-traced (and conversely, describe when cases did not originate or spread in school).

Orchard Prairie has had zero occurrences of school-borne COVID-19 cases among students and staff. Our district has had one student that contracted the virus from an outside source and no in school transmission resulted from this case.

5. Mitigation efforts - As a newly hired first year Superintendent, I shared the OSPI Reopening Guide and created a plan with the staff that followed all the DOH guidelines of masking at all times, 6 foot distancing, frequent hand washing and deep cleaning of the school. Many of the mitigation efforts were costly and came out of our fund balance. These items have asterisks placed in front of the item.

- Daily temperature checks taken every morning and after lunch prior to having recess. As of March 1st, these temp checks at school will be eliminated, unless a student does not bring his/her attestation or a student looks ill.
- Attestation required of all students.
- *Hand washing prior to entering the classroom, after recess, and prior to eating lunch in the classroom. Touchless hand sanitizer and paper towel dispensers.
- Twice weekly outdoor all school meeting with "COVID cheer" reminding students of handwashing techniques, mask wearing, and social distancing.
- Employees complete attestation and record temperature each morning as they enter the school.
- COVID 19 symptom tracking sheet for all students absent.
- *Phone call home to by RN or secretary to confirm symptoms and possible outside exposure.
- * Increased nursing hours to support adequate coverage of COVID response/student follow up.
- *New health room with quarantine area.
- Cohorts stay together at recess. All groups are separated and rotate availability of playground toys and area.
- Six-foot distancing in class - only teachers move rooms not students.
- The bathrooms are assigned to specific cohorts.
- *Additional custodial time was developed for cleaning while students are at lunch recess and after school for thorough cleaning.
- Custodian was trained by an East Valley custodian and Walter E. Nelson representative
- *OSPI approved Hillyard cleaning products are used listed below:
 - ❖ Suprox
 - ❖ Q.T.Plus
 - ❖ Re-Juv-Nal
 - ❖ Enviro Care used in the Ryobi fogger on the bus and in the classrooms during lunch

Republic School District/Kevin Young, Superintendent

After many hours of work by our reopening committee throughout August 2020, we were able to open school in-person and on-time for every student who chose to attend. We have been serving students in the building since August 27, 2020. We were able to accomplish this because many of our parents chose remote instruction, and we have a very dedicated workforce who wanted as many children as possible to attend school in person. Due to our large room sizes in grades 7-12 we are able to accommodate 20 students in person at a time. In grades K-6 those numbers are a little lower due to smaller classrooms.

I believe we are one of very few districts who have been serving students on-site with a completely normal schedule. They attend every day and we have not reduced our instructional hours at all. We have been very fortunate to have zero COVID-19 transmissions within the school district (1 student tested positive after being exposed at home this entire school year to date). This can be attributed to many factors, including relatively low community transmission, safeguards we've taken, and a willingness of our entire community to make it work.

Unfortunately, as we prepare for the 2021-22 school year, our resounding successes cannot be repeated for ALL students in our school district. We now have a "waiting list" to attend in person, but we do not have the staff or the space to let all students return in person. Without a change in the 6ft. physical distancing requirements we will not be able to serve all students all day or every day. As you might conclude, this is going to be a difficult pill to swallow for all of the students who have attended this entire school year without a disruption to the school day. Do we really have to consider offering students LESS in person instruction next year because more students and parents are comfortable returning in person?

Throughout this school year, I feel our school community has risen to every challenge. Guidance has not been consistent all year but we have always adjusted to ensure students can learn from a teacher in person. I am very concerned that to be able to serve ALL of our students we're going to have to ask students who have gone to school full time for the entire 20-21 school year to "go backwards" and implement some sort of hybrid schedule. Not only will this be unpopular....IT IS NOT BETTER FOR STUDENTS. We also do not have equitable access to internet in all of our homes. "Making" students stay home or use an online model just simply will not work for all of our students. This is the main reason we have tried so hard to have students in person all year. There is no other good option for many of our students.

Even with unlimited resources, we would be hard pressed to serve all of our students in person without cutting instructional hours and in person opportunities. We do not have the space or the educated workforce that would be required to do that for next year. The one thing that WILL allow us to serve all of our students is a reduction of the 6ft. physical distancing requirement. I would recommend language that provides some flexibility like: Between 3 and 6 feet or As much as possible, but more than 3 feet.

We are committed to following other mitigation practices including health screenings, mask wearing, and conducting contact tracing etc. if needed. These have worked in our school district. Students have not contracted or spread COVID-19 in our schools all year despite the fact that we've been open in person every day and all day for around 200 students.

We will find a way to continue to offer remote/online learning for all students and families who wish to continue. A small number of students and parents have enjoyed and even excelled with these programs. While it is a small minority, we will commit to providing this option for those students and families.

Please help us bring back our remaining students who wish to return to in person learning by reducing the 6 ft. of physical distancing requirement. Many of them are struggling with remote learning and will benefit greatly from in person instruction. Everyone in our community (and I'm sure across the state) has been doing the best they can with this trying situation. I am fearful the consequences of not being able to serve all children in person is doing a great amount of damage that society will be dealing with for decades.

Riverside School District/Dr. Ken Russell, Superintendent

What students you have back in school, and at what points in the year they returned to school.

The **Riverside School District** started the 2020-2021 school year as follows:

- P-5 students on an AB hybrid schedule. Group A attended two days per week on Monday and Tuesday, and Group B attended two days per week on Thursday and Friday.
- 6-12 students on an ABCD hybrid schedule. Group A attended in person on Monday, Group B on Tuesday, Group C on Thursday, and Group D on Friday.
- On Wednesday, we provided an additional day for K-12 students without reliable internet and students with disabilities. We also connected with students remotely.
- We provided remote learning to about 20% of our students and families who chose it.

Starting November 12th (9 week mark), Riverside SD moved to and remain on the following schedule:

- K-5 students in person M-F. We use a true cohort model.
- 6-12 students on an AB hybrid schedule. Group A attends Monday, Wednesday, and every other Friday. Group B attends Tuesday, Thursday, and every other Friday.
 - Secondary students attend three classes per day per quarter to diminish passing times and non-cohorting.
- We continue to provide remote learning for about 15% of our families.

Number of students in classes at the various grade levels, and what percentage of your overall enrollment is now “in school” and for what amount of time?

About 90% of our overall students now attend in person either daily or 2-3 days per week from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM. We have had to end the student day earlier this year in order to keep class sizes smaller in accordance with the 6 foot physical distancing requirement.

Provide detail of the number of cases you have experienced (students and staff) and include any in school transmission that has been contact-traced (and conversely, describe when cases did not originate or spread in school).

We have experienced 57 total confirmed cases of COVID-19 (40 students and 17 staff members). Not a single case is confirmed to have been transmitted at school.

Describe in detail all the other mitigation efforts (NTI's) you assure (and know that, from a public health perspective, MASKING is and remains a very key expectation and an effective mitigation practice).

We have been and continue to be fully committed to the following **mitigation measures**:

- Face coverings
- Health screening (attestations and daily temperature checks)
- Protection of high-risk staff and students
- Additional PPE for high risk staff and students
- Relentless education on staying home when sick
- Hand hygiene (we schedule hand washing, for example)
- Cleaning and disinfecting
- Contact tracing (we have hired medically trained paraeducators at each school to serve as our COVID-coordinators, and we have 2 full time nurses (we receive only .2 FTE from the State).
- Proper ventilation
- Cohorting at the elementary level and for about 50% of our secondary students
- Seating charts (for effective contact tracing)
- Vaccines for about 70 of our staff members (through a local doctor). We have an additional vaccination clinic ready to go when the vaccines are available.
- Student and staff testing through the DOH *Learn to Return* program
- Signage and communication plan regarding mitigation measures

Include qualitative data and perspectives/lessons learned from your district – in other words, TELL YOUR STORY.

- We are proud of our efforts to provide in person learning while protecting our students and staff against the COVID-19 virus.
- At this point in time, however, we are “stuck” with our current AB rotating schedule for students in grades 6-12 if we do not get some relief from the 6 foot distancing requirement.

- We would be able to bring all of our secondary students back to daily in person learning if the 6 foot distancing requirement was diminished to 4 feet. We are so close to making it work!
- Our P-5 students are back to their regular schedules, and our mitigation measures are working really well. We are keeping our students and staff safe, and we are diminishing the academic and social-emotional learning loss from last spring and early fall. We now need to bring our 6-12 students fully back to do the same.
- We have seen a 25% increase in mental health and counseling referrals for our secondary students, and we are really worried about long-lasting effects if we are not able to provide daily in person learning.
- If the 6 foot distancing requirement is diminished to allow our secondary students to attend in person daily, we will still meet the needs of our students and families who choose to learn remotely. We have had a successful remote learning approach this year, and we will only get better moving forward.

We greatly appreciate your consideration. Together, we can do this!

Selkirk School District/Nancy Lotze, Superintendent

230 students (2020-21) – 260 students (2019-20) ~ 50 staff

Who Came Back in 2020-21?

In 2019-20, Selkirk School District, located in northeast Pend Oreille County, enrolled 260 students. In August 2020, 213 students enrolled on the first day for an in-person hybrid model. Throughout the year enrollment increased to 234 students as of March 1, 2021. While some of those are returning students, others are new. Selkirk did not offer an online option for students wanting a distance program as we did not have the capacity to develop both a quality online component and an in-person program. There are ample established public school programs available for online learning and we provided contact information to parents. We opted to focus on an in-person program and plan for inevitable quarantined students.

A hybrid model was implemented for the first five weeks with 50% of the students on a two-day schedule and 50% on the other two days. Prior to mid-August the plan had been for a full time in-person reopen, but the hybrid model was a concession to Northeast TriCounty Health District's (NETCHD) concern over the increase in positive COVID cases in the county. At the end of five weeks (October 12), we increased to four days per week for all students in grades 1-12. Kindergarten remains on a hybrid two-day schedule because of the 6' foot requirement.

In-Person Model from the Beginning

Even as our county increased in positive COVID cases toward the end of summer and the recommendation from the health department was to start in remote-only learning, our school board made the decision to open in-person, not because we disregarded the advice of our local health district, but because we worked with them. While not explicitly permissive, they graciously allowed us to engage in an in-person learning model. County-level data was the smallest set considered at the state level, but together we analyzed the unique features of our area. Coupled with the low incidence of positive cases in our three communities, we chose to open in-person on August 31, 2020, cautiously and with careful planning.

We opened at a time when the county metrics indicated we were over the threshold provided by DOH, however, Spokane County recorded significantly higher COVID rates than Pend Oreille and at least three districts (Mead, Deer Park, and Central Valley) chose to open there.

Selkirk normally operates on a four-day week schedule from 8:10 – 3:38 (3:25 for elementary), but this year we are dismissing one hour early. That hour allows teachers to focus on students who had learning loss from the past spring, create tentative remote-only plans in the event of a closure, and develop lessons for any student home because of the 10-day rule if they had even one symptom on the DOH illness list. Students are assigned remote learning activities for the hour. Students in kindergarten are also assigned tasks for the two at-home learning days.

Even though at one point the county exceeded a high of over 600 cases per thousand, six months later we are still operating in-person with almost no break. There was a two-week remote-only learning period in November for grades 6-12 when one teacher and one student tested positive, but the closure was related to the high number of staff identified as close contacts. We simply ran out of adults and substitutes are in short supply. Our elementary building remained open continuously and we modified our practices to minimize adults as close contacts.

The Exception – Who is Getting Left Out?

100% of students in grades 1-12 are in school full-time except one hour per day. 80% of Kindergarten students remain on a two day per week in-person schedule with 2 days remote. We have approximately 3-4 who have been extended to full days for a variety of education reasons.

We lost about 17% of our students to homeschool or online programs and our classrooms are currently “at capacity” for the available square footage (with the 6' foot requirement) in four out of six elementary grades. If more students enroll this spring, we may be forced to return to hybrid for those grade levels as physical space is limited for classroom alternatives.

Are Schools Transmitting COVID-19?

Our first confirmed case was the last week of October with a student and staff member both testing positive within days of each other. The student had been in contact with the staff member in a small room with poor ventilation for more than 15-minutes; however, it was difficult to assess who contracted the virus first. The topic of the meeting was inadequate mask use. That seems to be our only confirmed instance of in-school transmission. There was one other case where lunch partners (two students seated across from each other at a 6 foot table) both tested positive but there was possible outside school contact as well.

We have had a total of nine students test positive for COVID, the youngest in 5th grade, and four staff members. A total of 88 students and 16 staff members have been quarantined throughout the school year. With the exception of the one or two incidents of in-school transfer, all other positive cases originated from outside exposure or unknown exposure and no other school transfer of COVID was seen.

There have been a number of scenarios that we assumed there would be in-school transfer: a positive student sitting across a lunch table from another student or on a school bus where it is difficult to insure students are wearing masks appropriately. However, there almost no transfer in those situations.

School seems to be a safe place for students. It is a place where students are reminded of increased hand hygiene eight times a day, mask-wearing is reinforced for at least six hours per day, and physical distancing encouraged when possible. With all of that, there is still a lower level of school transmission of the COVID virus than in the community in general. Even our small numbers demonstrate that. NETCHD has recorded 639 lab confirmed positive COVID cases in Pend Oreille County. Operating in-person school at Selkirk for the past six months has only added one or two cases to that number. All other staff or students testing positive did so from OUTSIDE of school exposure.

Mitigation Efforts

Our students and staff have been diligent with reopening guidelines including health screening, increased hand hygiene, face coverings, and physical distancing. Increased air flow in buses, classrooms, and office spaces have been accomplished by opening windows, adding air purifiers with HEPA filters, and increasing fresh air through HVAC systems. However, physical distancing is challenging in an elementary school, especially at the lower grades. Additionally, based on health department guidelines, students do not wear masks at recess or when outside spaces are used as classroom. Although, masks are worn consistently any time a student is in the building. Adults wear masks inside and outside unless they are working alone.

Our practice has also been to follow very strict thresholds with student and staff illnesses. In addition, we recently completed the waiver to become an approved testing site. We went through a short period when DOH changed the symptom screening chart to allow for two symptoms prior to requiring a negative COVID test or a 10-day quarantine at home, but after November's experience, we reverted back to a single symptom requiring a negative test or that students stay home for 10 days. We are now a testing site and will be able to provide rapid and PCR tests for our students and staff.

Larger districts in the region, Mead and Deer Park, which opened in September as well, offered us models and as more districts moved to in-person, we all learned together how to mitigate conditions and deal effectively with those inevitable positive cases.

Lessons Learned

Despite our efforts and successes we have been unable to bring back kindergarten students full time because of the six foot rule. As high school athletics began again this month, we found ourselves putting students on a bus for over two hours one-way to an athletic contest with less than six feet of distancing between them. This seems to put sports at a higher priority than academics, not the message we wish to send to parents and certainly not to our students.

There is no doubt of the effectiveness of masks and handwashing in combating this virus, but our experience is showing that six foot distancing may not be as critical. If we can move to less than six feet we would be able to serve all kindergartners full time as well as accommodate any new students who enroll in our "at-capacity" classes. Our students have benefitted immensely from an in-person program all year although we are still

identifying losses from last spring and our hybrid start. We need to figure out ways to keep all students in-person full time.

Many schools currently have a number of students who chose homeschool or distance learning with an online program. If all students returned to in-class programs, the six foot distance requirement would send virtually every district in our region, including Selkirk, back to hybrid, part-time status. That fate seems counterproductive to the direction we hope to move. It is time to allow some districts to try an education model that includes modification of the six foot requirement in controlled situations.

Rosalia School District/Rick Linehan, Superintendent

March 16, 2020 was when we were ordered to close down school. This was a sad day for all of us and one that we had hoped would be temporary. This now has been one year and we are hoping that our town, county, state and country along with the world will have respite to the pandemic. The week after closure we began a great team effort to provide all the children in our district breakfast and lunch that were delivered to each home via our bus routes. This provided food for all and gave our students the food security they desperately needed.

The community of the Rosalia School District has been resilient, thoughtful in their care and respect for each other concerning the role everyone played in Rosalia's 2020-21 (P-12) education. Our community took it to heart to be good role models and teaching the students the correct way to stay healthy. Wearing masks, washing hands, staying 6 feet apart, a luxury of having a big school house and small student population, was a big reason we were able to offer our community the opportunity to send their children to school 5 days a week starting September 14th. Our original plan was to begin September 8th but the Malden fire postponed the start of school a week. This fire was devastating to residents in Malden and affected all of the Rosalia School District community and displaced many of our students and families with long term ramifications.

A big thanks to those involved in the reopening plan that included staff, parents and community members putting together a workable plan that followed the CDC and Whitman County recommendations. We worked throughout the summer of 2020 to put a plan that the community and staff could support, which was no small task. The following were the big events to our recovery:

- March 23rd through June 19th breakfast/lunches bagged and delivered to all children via busses
- Summer workshops in July to develop our reopening plan which was delivered August 11th.
- All classrooms were reorganized mid-August to establish 6 foot spacing of desks
- PPE were attained for all staff and students
- Hired an additional teacher to split students to assure the 6-foot rule in classes
- Established an attestation protocol for all busses and entry into the school house
- Busses established new seating charts and intense cleaning protocol between routes
- New HVAC was completed during the summer of 2020 and an additional Bi-Polar Ionization system installed to assure our airflow Covid free.
- Strict rules were taught to students and staff following CDC and Whitman County Covid protocol

Sprague School District/Bill Ressel, Superintendent

The Sprague School District is a small rural school district that currently serves 32 high school students and 49 preschool through fourth grade students. We have an academic cooperative with Lamont School District, where the fifth through eighth grade students are educated. We share teaching staff, support staff and transportation with Lamont School District and thus work very closely together to create a P-12 educational system for the communities of Sprague and Lamont.

Students we have back in school, learning model in place, and points in the year they returned to school:

Sprague School District's 4-year-old preschool students started in-person learning this year on September 2, 2020. They attend school from 8:13 AM to 11:15 PM on Monday, Wednesday and Friday each week. We chose to suspend 3-year-old preschool for the year, but will be offering 3-year-old preschool again during the 2021-2022 school year.

Sprague Elementary School's grades K-4 started in-person learning on a hybrid schedule from the onset of the school year on August 31. The initial hybrid schedule consisted of Monday through Friday in-person learning from 8:13 AM to 11:40 AM with remote learning in the afternoon. Then, starting October 26, grades K-4 began attending school in-person all day from 8:13 AM to 2:55 PM on Monday through Thursday and half-days from 8:13 AM to 11:40 AM on Friday each week with remote learning in the afternoon on that day. Sprague Elementary School started the school year with six remote learners. As we have been able to increase our in-person learning to full-time, four of the remote learners have returned to school for in-person learning because their parents can now work during the day and not have to worry about daycare for their children as they once did when we were releasing our elementary students at 11:40 AM daily. Within the last three weeks, we have had two students transfer into the district and their parents have chosen to have them learn remotely.

Sprague High School's grades 9-12 started in-person learning on a hybrid schedule from the beginning of the school year on August 31. The initial hybrid schedule consisted of Monday through Thursday in-person learning from 8:13 AM to 11:40 AM with remote learning in the afternoon and remote learning all day on Fridays. Then, starting February 5, our high school students started attending in-person school on Fridays from 8:13 AM to 11:40 AM with remote learning in the afternoon as well. Therefore, they are now attending school with a hybrid schedule with in-person learning each morning and remote learning in the afternoon for the same amount of time each day of the week. Sprague High School started out with five remote learners. As of the last week of February, there is now only one remote learner.

Number of students in classes at the various grade levels and percentage of overall enrollment now "in school":

With four remote learners, Sprague Elementary School now has about 91% of its students learning in-person. Before the addition of two remote learners who transferred into the district three weeks ago, we were at 95.5% for in-person learning. One of the remote learners attends school in-person for the half-day of in-person learning on Fridays.

With only one remote learner, Sprague High School now has about 97% learning in-person on our Monday through Friday hybrid schedule.

We have discussed increasing our in-person time into the afternoon for our high school students but the need to maintain six-foot social distancing combined with the need to share staff members with Lamont Middle School has limited our ability to do so. We are essentially "frozen" in our current hybrid model without being able to increase in-person time until the guidelines we are required to follow change.

Number of cases we have experienced (students and staff), including any in-school transmission:

We have experienced four total confirmed cases of COVID-19 this school year. **All four cases have been adults with no students having had confirmed cases.** Two of these cases occurred in October and the other two occurred in January.

Of the two cases that occurred in October, it was determined through contact tracing that one of the cases was transmitted within the school. When the two cases occurred in October, we chose to go into full remote learning mode for two weeks as a precautionary measure to protect both staff and students from further spread of COVID-19.

Regarding the two confirmed COVID-19 cases in January, it was determined that the exposure was due to an outside source not involving school. In addition, these two staff members have very little contact with other staff members or students, so we were safe to continue in-person learning at both the high school and elementary school level without additional in-school exposure.

Mitigation efforts:

From the very beginning, Sprague School personnel have been fully committed to adhering to the following mitigation efforts and we have not deviated from these efforts:

- Six-foot distancing for students in all classrooms.
- Face coverings for all staff, students and visitors.
- Very limited entry into school by visitors. Visitors are normally not allowed access beyond front office.
- Cohorting at all grade levels.
 - Elementary students have recess, mask breaks, music and PE separately or in pre-approved modified cohorts.
 - High school students stay in the same cohort classroom each day and teachers move to them.
- Daily seating charts at every grade level.
- Only one student or adult allowed to use multi-occupancy bathrooms at time.
- High school students pick up a bag breakfast and eat socially distanced in their cohort classroom and pick up a bag lunch as they leave at 11:40 AM each day.
- Elementary students are delivered a bag breakfast to eat in their cohort classroom socially distanced and eat lunch socially distanced in the lunchroom in a split shift so only half the students are eating at one time.
- Daily attestations and temperature checks required for all staff members and students.
- A second temperature check for elementary students during lunch period since they are in school all day.
- A hand washing or antibacterial hand cleansing regimen for students at all levels at specified times during the day.
- Phone calls home by office personnel when students are absent asking for information regarding symptoms.
- Cleaning and disinfecting of desks daily and high touch areas disinfected multiple times daily by staff.
- Increased air exchange durations and rates to provide improved nightly flush and better ventilation and daytime air quality. Whenever possible, staff have kept outside doors open to increase airflow.

We have recently become part of the “Learn to Return” grant program. In this program, we will be able to do in-school (student and staff) COVID-19 testing. Later into the program, we will also be able to do in-community testing. The in-school testing will be of two types:

1. On-demand due to symptoms present and/or known close contact for students/staff.
2. Scheduled asymptomatic testing for staff members who choose to do so.

Qualitative data/perspectives/lessons learned from our district:

From the very beginning of our journey in reopening our wonderful small rural school for effective in-person instruction for our students, we asked for input from both staff and parents/community members in the form of surveys and reopening meetings during the summer months leading up to the start of the school year. The results of these outreaches to stakeholders have been paramount not only in gaining trust with them but also, more importantly, in gaining a workable and effective system that has kept everyone safe while they are on school grounds.

We have remained committed and loyal to our remote learners and have respected the right of our remote learners to continue to receive a quality education. However, this has been extremely challenging for our teaching staff who have needed to balance their time between providing for both in-person and remote learners. It is our hope that the parents who have opted to have us teach their children remotely will continue to gain trust and reconsider bringing their students back for in-person instruction as the infection rate of the virus continues to decline.

As we have progressed through the school year with absolutely no virus contraction of students and with only one confirmed contraction of a staff member within our buildings, parents of students who were originally remote learners have developed an increasing trust in us and our ability to keep students and staff safe through our mitigation efforts. This has greatly reduced the number of remote learners as they have gained confidence in our ability to protect their children.

Rightfully so, we have put a substantial amount of our funding and focus on improving the educational equity of our most vulnerable learners—including special needs students and our elementary students. At an additional expense to our small district, we hired an additional elementary teacher to break up a first-second grade combination classroom in order to more effectively cohort and to better address the learning loss that occurred when we abruptly shut down in-person learning in March of 2020. Because of this action, our special needs student population is able to receive additional support at all levels since our special education instructor is no longer teaching second grade math during part of her day. In addition, reading levels have steadily increased for our elementary students as evidenced by their improved AIMSweb reading scores. We attribute this improvement to our nearly full-time in-person learning model at the elementary grades and our willingness to spend funds to break up our first-second grade combination classroom. We also attribute a great deal of our success at the elementary level to having a counselor available for a daily check-in with students and entire classrooms to help us meet their social-emotional needs as we educate them.

Conclusion:

We fervently want to bring our high school students back to more time per day from our current 3.45 hours per day. **However, as stated earlier, we are “frozen” in our current hybrid model without being able to increase in-person time until the six-foot distancing guidelines required of us change.** High school student apathy and failing grades are at an all-time high. We are finding that as they leave our campus for remote learning each afternoon, some choose to just “check out”. Worse yet, in the absence of adult supervision in the afternoon, other high school students choose to fill their time with unhealthy activities that may have a long-term negative effect on their lives and their wellbeing. We have discussed increasing our in-person time into the afternoon but the need to maintain six-foot social distancing combined with the need to share staff members with Lamont Middle School has limited our ability to do so. Due to our small numbers, if we did not have to maintain the six-foot distance between student desks, we could easily work out a different cohorting model that still falls within the DOH guidelines but allows us to move on to additional daily in-person learning time for our high school students in the afternoon. This would help us improve their academic success rate and would also help us better serve their social-emotional needs as we have been able to do with our elementary students.

Please be clear in my communication that the relaxing of the six-foot requirement is paramount to the improved success rate of our high school students! Many are simply failing in our current hybrid model and it is time to focus on their needs (both academic and social-emotional) by trusting that our track record this year has proven we are able to mitigate student safety issues even when students are sitting at a closer proximity within our safe and sterile classroom environments.

Valley School District/Ben Ferney, Superintendent

I proudly serve as the superintendent in Valley School District in Stevens County, just 40 miles north of Spokane, Washington. Our K-12 onsite free and reduced-rate meals participation ranges from 70-80% of the student population year to year. We are an innovative school district with four different student programs: Valley Early Learning Center, Valley School (K-8), Paideia High School (one of two K-8 cooperative high schools established in Washington State), and Columbia Virtual Academy. Our district also operates VL Transport Center, a cooperative housed in Valley School District that serves four surrounding school districts. Valley School District is innovative and continues to grow.

The District Leadership Team, in coordination with staff and the community, developed a 5 Stage Reopening Plan (see below). We opened school on Sept. 1st in Stage 1 with 100% distance learning and moved quickly to Stage 2 Limited Hybrid by serving small groups of students furthest away from educational justice on campus. Our buses have been delivering meals and curriculum to students learning remotely as needed during these different stages.



Valley School District STAGES OF REOPENING – SCHOOL YEAR 2020-21

SCHEDULE	Grades TK/K-5	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-12
STAGE 1 100% Learning from a Distance	All students learn from home at their own pace, blending - virtual class time and phone student/teacher/parent interactions - paper/pencil worksheets and assignments - extended learning opportunities	All students learn from home on a modified schedule, blending - virtual class time and phone student/teacher/parent interactions - online coursework - book/paper assignments - extended learning opportunities	All students login and complete coursework and assignments online on a modified schedule, working at their own pace, but with weekly assignment due dates.
STAGE 2 Limited Hybrid	Distance learning. Students in greatest need of support participating in limited in-person instruction* at school.	Distance learning. Students in greatest need of support participating in limited in-person instruction* at school.	Distance learning. Students in greatest need of support participating in limited in-person instruction* at school.
STAGE 3 Small Cohort Hybrid	Distance learning combined with in-person learning* at school in small cohorts/groups. All students participating with schedules to be determined.	Distance learning combined with in-person learning* at school in small cohorts/groups. All students participating with schedules to be determined.	Distance learning combined with in-person learning* at school in small cohorts/groups. All students participating with schedules to be determined.
STAGE 4 All Rotating Hybrid	All students participate with in-person learning* at school on a rotating schedule, supplemented with distance learning at home.	All students participate with in-person learning* at school on a rotating schedule, supplemented with distance learning at home.	All students participate with in-person learning* at school on a rotating schedule, supplemented with distance learning at home.
STAGE 5 100% In-Person at School All Day	Students attend Mon-Fri in regular classroom.* Standard schedule with some modification for staggered recesses and meals.	Students attend Mon-Fri.* Block schedules with two core classes per day and staggered rotation through classrooms, with some modification for recesses and meals.	Students attend Mon-Fri.* Standard schedule with some modification.
	*All in-person learning arrangements require daily health screening, masks and social distancing.	*All in-person learning arrangements require daily health screening, masks and social distancing.	*All in-person learning arrangements require daily health screening, masks and social distancing.

State guidance for all Washington schools includes:

- Daily health screenings required for each student, including temperature check
- Students and staff will wear face coverings while at school
- Physical distancing required (desks spaced apart, meals in classrooms, limited interactions with others outside of classroom/cohort)

Please note:

- Our current learning model/schedule will be adjusted depending on the COVID-19 situation in our county. Schools may move through Stages 1-5 in no particular order (forward or backward, potentially skipping stages).
- Columbia Virtual Academy will operate consistently on its regular schedule.

As the first semester unfolded, the District Leadership Team investigated how to phase in face-to-face learning, using a “hybrid” learning model combining some remote and some in-person instruction for some or all students. Decisions were based on current local and regional COVID-19 infection levels indicating more favorable conditions for operating our schools effectively with all recommended health and safety measures in place. Regardless of where we work and learn, we are and have been committed to helping all students achieve learning goals.

We moved from Stage 2 to Stage 3 (distance learning combined with small cohorts in-person) in early October. In Stage 3, our priority was to implement a cautious and stepped approach by first welcoming to school our

youngest learners (K-3) who have been shown to have the biggest challenges in learning remotely. Throughout October, grades K-12 came onto campus for in-person instruction up to four days per week. Later in November, we moved into Stage 4 of the reopening plan where we remain today.

Currently, 85-90% of our K-12 students learn at school Monday through Thursday from 8:30-2:15 pm. We use the 2:15-3:15 p.m. time and Fridays to connect with remote learners. We have 16% of the K-8 students and 10% of the 9-12 students strictly learning remotely by choice. With generally one teacher serving a grade level or subject, we do not have sufficient staff available to assign any teacher entirely to remote learning, so we carved out time during the week to accommodate this need.

The students and staff have been incredible with adhering to daily attestations, physical distancing, and masking requirements. We have had students back on campus since October and have not experienced spread of the virus within the campus. We are currently planning on bringing athletics online in the next few weeks.

We are facing some challenging barriers to returning all students to campus for a full schedule five days a week. We currently have waiting lists in some grade bands because our classrooms cannot fit all the students that would like to return for in-person instruction because of spacing limitations. If the six-foot rule for physical distancing is *not* adjusted for the 2021-22 school year, there is a good possibility that VSD would need to *shift backwards* into a hybrid model (Stage 3) in order to accommodate all the students. For our traditional schools, we know the best modality for students to learn is in-person on campus where we can better meet their academic and social emotional needs.

We greatly value our relationships and connections with students and families and will move forward with our families' needs in our hearts and minds. Above all else, the district regards the safety and security of our students, staff, and families as its highest priority.

Washtucna School District/Todd Spear, Superintendent

What students you have back in school, and at what points in the year they returned to school.

Washtucna School District Re-opened on August 31st, 2020 with three different teaching and learning modalities to choose from for families:

- In-person learning, PK-12, Monday – Thursday, remote learning on Friday.
- Hybrid In-person Learning, PK-12, In-person Monday – Wednesday, Remote learning Tuesday – Thursday – Friday.
- Remote Learning, PK-12, Monday – Friday, Friday option for in-person individual instruction time.

Define the model that has been in place at different points in the year, and that is now in place (that is – details of hybrid, schedules, amount of time in the day...all that stuff)

- Washtucna In-person learning, Monday – Thursday start and end times: 8:00am – 2:50pm
- In-person learning class sizes and cohorts. K-5 class sizes are limited to 10 students with proper social distancing within the classrooms. The 6-12 schedule was blocked, limited student transition and maintained grade level cohorts to the best of our ability.
- Teacher Access time (45 minutes) is available for students, Monday – Friday, for additional support (students can use email or Google Meets to connect with classroom teachers).
- Friday morning is reserved for our most vulnerable learners and students requesting or receiving invites to attend school. We focus on our remote learning students, students on IEPs/504s, students with connectivity issues, students failing or in jeopardy of failing and credit recovery.

Number of students in classes at the various grade levels, and what percentage of your overall enrollment is now “in school” and for what amount of time.

- All Washtucna students and families were offered in-person instruction from 8:00am – 2:50pm, Monday – Thursday. Fridays were reserved for asynchronous learning and in-person for the most vulnerable learning population from 8:30am – 12:00pm.
- 88% of Washtucna PK-5 students are attending in-person learning. All but 1 of the remote learning students attends in-person learning on Friday mornings.
- 93% of 6-8 students are attending in person learning. All 6-8 students attend in-person learning at some point during the school week.
- 100% of 9-12 students are attending in-person learning.

Provide detail of the number of cases you have experienced (students and staff) and include any in school transmission that has been contact-traced (and conversely, describe when cases did not originate or spread in school).

Since the start of the school year on August 31st, 2021, Washtucna has experienced three confirmed cases of COVID-19 (3 adults/staff members) and zero cases involving students. All three adult positive cases of COVID-19 were due to outside the school contact. Not a single in-school transmission case has been confirmed amongst students and or staff.

Describe in detail all the other mitigation efforts (NTI's) you assure (and know that, from public health perspective, MASKING is and remains a very key expectation and an effective mitigation practice)

- Following the CDC, OSPI and state's expectations for returning to school safely.
- Mask worn by all adults and students.
- Cleaning and disinfecting daily routine (buildings and transportation).
- Alternative assignments for high risk employees.
- Required PPE supplies for all students and employees.
- On-going education and communication to families.
- Upgraded ventilation filters.
- Staff and visitors on-site attestation process, daily.
- COVID-19 informational postings throughout the building.
- Classroom seating charts, designated furniture arrangement.
- Safety committee and plan regarding mitigation efforts.
- On-going communication and planning with Adams County DOH.
- Weekly meetings with our school nurse, reviewing current standing and procedures.

- Home and school attestation process.
- Second temperature screening for all students and staff.
- PK-5 limited class sizes, 6-12 class cohorts (very few exceptions).
- 6-12 block schedule to limit daily transitions from room to room.
- Vaccination clinic offered to all Washtucna staff members.
- Learn to Return on-site "Gold Standard" COVID-19 testing. Testing includes diagnostic testing and asymptomatic testing for adults.

Include qualitative data and perspectives/lessons learned from your district – in other words, TELL YOUR STORY.

- Washtucna took the opportunity to return to in-person education on August 31st. Our size allowed us to provide a safe and healthy school environment for students, staff and families. As we didn't want to force families into a decision that they were not comfortable with, a hybrid in-person and remote learning options were offered. Our size also forced us into a full day of asynchronous learning to allow teachers the proper time to plan, prepare and provide for our remote learning families. The school environment in Washtucna has proven to be a safe environment for both students and staff. As we remain diligent in providing a safe teaching and learning environment we are excited to see additional opportunities for student to return to in-person learning.