



January 7, 2022

Dear Everett Public Schools' team,

It has been great to see students and staff back from winter break with learning in full swing. The weather was a challenge, but everyone dealt with it well. Thank you for your hard work and for everything you give for our students.

With the evolving situation regarding the COVID Omicron variant, I wanted to update you on some important information to help us all be prepared in case **a school** needs to close due to COVID cases or staff absences due to illness.

COVID information

The Omicron variant is highly contagious and just like other school districts in the state and nation, we have been experiencing an incredible increase in the number of cases in our schools.

The most important thing we all can do to keep this from spreading further in our schools is to stay home if you have any [symptoms](#).

Additional ways we can all help support the health and safety of students and staff include:

- Get a COVID booster shot
- Avoid large gatherings
- Continue to wash your hands regularly
- Wear masks properly
- Maintain a social distance from others

It will take all of us working together to keep our schools healthy.

Masks

With the nature and surge of the Omicron variant, for any interested staff, KN95 masks are available in your schools through your site COVID coordinator. There are several different brands which are sized for different facial shapes and sizes. A KN95 mask will fit tighter than a medical mask.

How will the district decide whether to change to remote learning?

The decision to transition a specific school to remote learning will be based on either the direction of the Department of Health, Snohomish Health District or the district's ability to have enough staff given absences due to illness.

To help prepare for the possibility of a quick pivot to remote learning, we ask students who currently take their district-issued Chromebooks to and from school daily to continue to do so. If we need to close a school or classroom, staff will have one day to prepare and distribute Chromebooks to those who do not typically take them home, and then remote learning will take place until it is safe to return to school. The teacher will utilize a digital platform and the learning structure and expectations will be communicated.

Since the change to remote learning will be based upon things out of our control, we may not have much notice before we need to quickly pivot. **I ask that you think through what might be needed for your job and duties if this happens.** If **an individual school** needs to close, it will be closed for 10 calendar days before reopening. That would mean one day for teachers to prepare and nine more calendar days. The building will be closed for all students and staff and it will be cleaned. This also means the school will be closed to the public and there will be no after school activities in the building. For now, high school athletics (gyms) will stay open if the school closes.

I would like to emphasize, we are not talking about a district-wide closure, but if **a school** must close. There are no plans to implement a district-wide closure.

Thank you for your continued partnership in supporting the well-being of our students and staff.

Stay safe and be well,

Dr. Ian B. Saltzman
Superintendent